

# HONK!

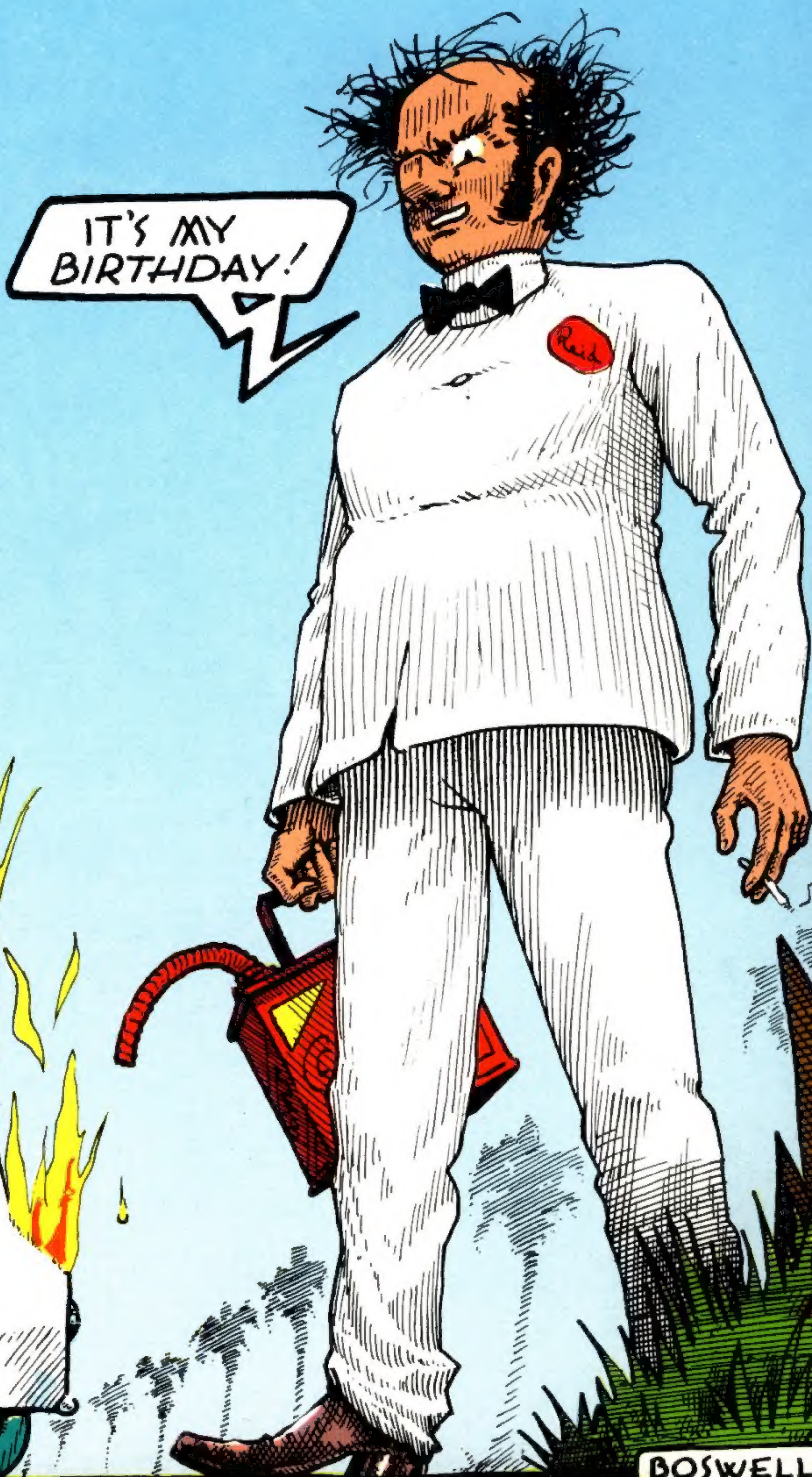
- ALAN MOORE
- J.R. WILLIAMS
- SIERGEY BROS.
- JOHN CALLAHAN
- PHIL ELLIOTT
- EDDIE CAMPBELL
- CRAIG BARTLETT
- GOTLIB

No. 4 □ \$2.75 (\$3.75 Canada)

Recommended for mature readers

A CONVERSATION  
WITH THE MAN  
BEHIND *REID FLEMING*

**DAVID  
BOSWELL**





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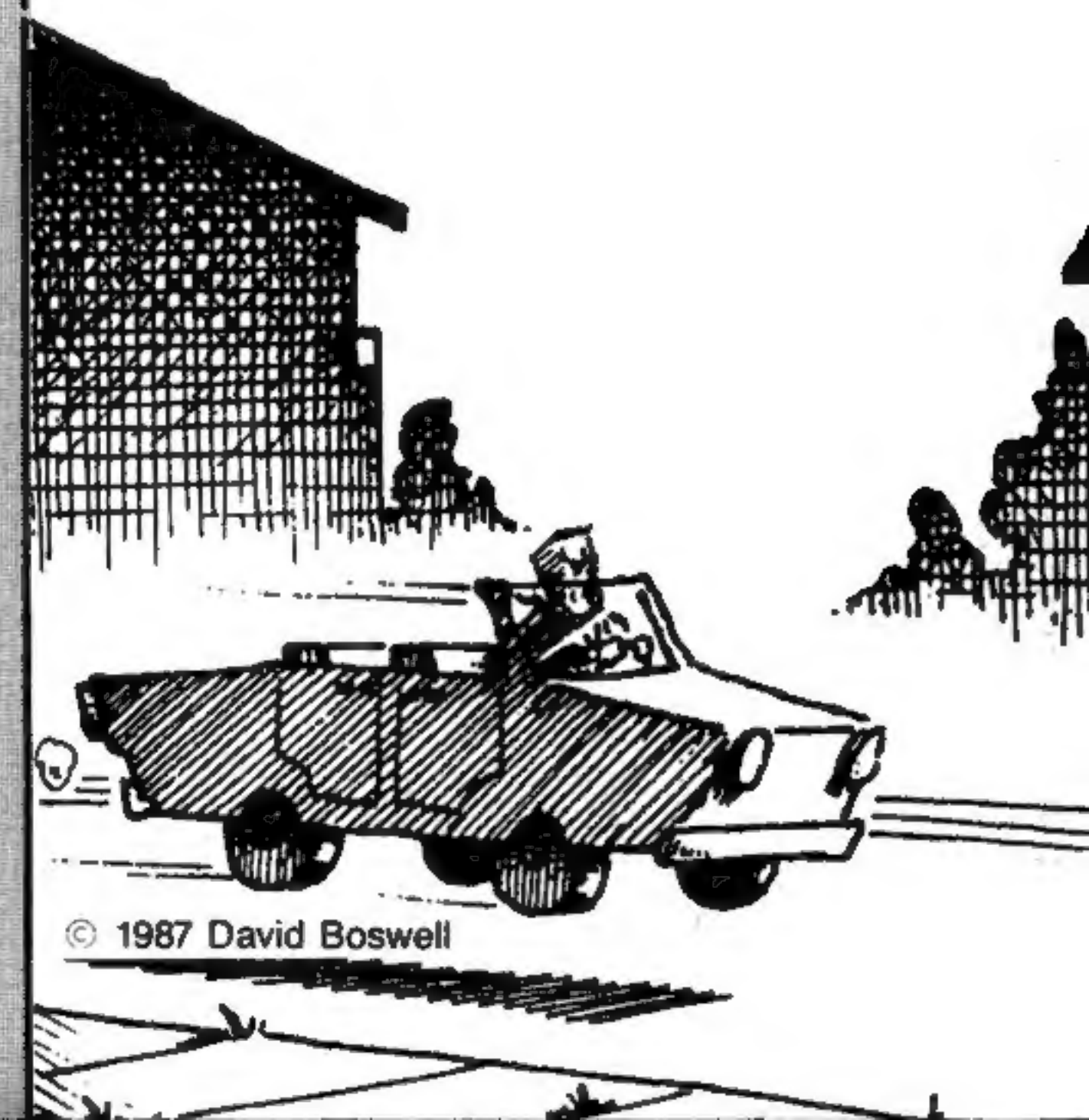
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© 1987 David Boswell



Monday, December 8, 1986

## Nicaragua, Honduras in Border Fight

### U.S. Pilots Ferry Troops to Airstrip in Battle Zone



Sandinista toward the

## MEMO FROM ME...

### Let's talk about me:

I like doing that. I like sitting down to a nice, piping-hot cup of tea and gabbing on and on about me. And what an interesting person I am, too, with plenty of amusing stories and several opinions and some very emphatic hand gestures to help illustrate them. Yes, you'd probably come away a richer person after a luncheon engagement with me. I know I do.

### Let's talk about how I came to edit this magazine:

There I was, sitting there, and Kim Thompson walked into the room, and he said, "Joe, how would you like to edit this magazine?" "Yes!" I ejaculated. And what a marvelous job I intend to do, too!

### Let's talk about my experience:

Oh, yes, I've got plenty of that! In fact, I've always had a hard time keeping my resume down to one page like you're supposed to.

### Let's talk about my ideas for making this a better magazine:

Well, that could be a whole paragraph all to itself!

### Let's talk about my latest sexual exploit:

(Kidding! I threw that one in to show you just how funny and off-the-wall I can get!)

### Let's talk about why you should buy this magazine rather than give your money to a homeless person who hasn't had anything to eat in three days:

Sure! But not right now! We're having too much fun!

### Let's talk about the kind of things I'd like to read if I only had time:

*The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, by William Shakespeare (I hear this one contains some of his best plays); Gary Groth's editorial in *Prime Cuts* #1 (I hear this one contains some of his best words).

### A sample anecdote about me that demonstrates my moral character:

Years ago, I was at a loud party at the University of My Choice—the sort of affair where lots of young, lustful bodies are pressed into a tiny, sweaty apartment—and found myself mixing drinks for a sweet girl

who licked her lips between sentences and sported very large breasts. We discoursed about the meaning of life, citing works of literature and art and Doobie Brothers' lyrics to illustrate our respective points. Shortly, between her fifth and sixth cup of Everclear punch, she fell in love with me. Next, she fell on the floor. I dragged her to the toilet, where she threw up a fair deal and called out my name between heaves. After she had finished, I walked her back to her dormitory in the cold night air. She snuggled up against me and was very appreciative, if you know what I mean. Knowing she was drunk, I declined her earnest invitation to "tuck her in." Years later, and I still do not regret my very noble behavior.

### Postscript:

Unless I think about it too much—and then I want to kill myself.

### Let's talk about the issue that concerns me the most:

It's "crack," of course. And before "crack" it was the homeless, and before that it was the missing children, and before that it was the nuclear winter. I think the whales were in there somewhere, too.

### Let's talk about the need for a humor publication in the late 1980s:

Nixon's in the White House again. He wants to put war toys in space and he's got a Central American hair up his ass that he's going to dig out with a shovel—all in your name. The B-52s could be dumping on Cambodia again for all you know. Protest? Yeah! Go stand with the sandal-wearing herd and shake your fist at the evil corporations, the dangerous reactors, the chemical weapons, the asinine foreign policies. Protest worked in the '60s, right? It extricated the U.S. from an unpopular (though, apparently, no longer unjust) war, it brought down an administration, it gave blacks some civil rights. But Nixon's triumphed! He's back in town. And the fans love every stinking minute of it.

So what's the point of a humor publication these days? *To make you laugh, goddamn you.*

Joe Sacco

## er Fatality Falling in er-55 Group

ARLENE CIMON  
s Staff Writer

WASHINGTON—Despite a slow rise in the incidence of cancer among Americans under age 55, the rate at which members of this group are dying of the disease is continuing to slow, the National Cancer Institute reported Sunday. Dr. Vincent T. DeVita, director of the institute, called the trend "one of the most encouraging cancer statistics we see this year," and attributed the declining death rate to advances in treatment. The institute, in its annual report on cancer incidence and survival, reported an unexpected slowing of new cases

## Impatience With Iran D to Sec

By JACK NELSON

WASHINGTON—secret operations in Iran-contras scandal combination of members of Presidential security edgeable sources of ideological interference with president's will.

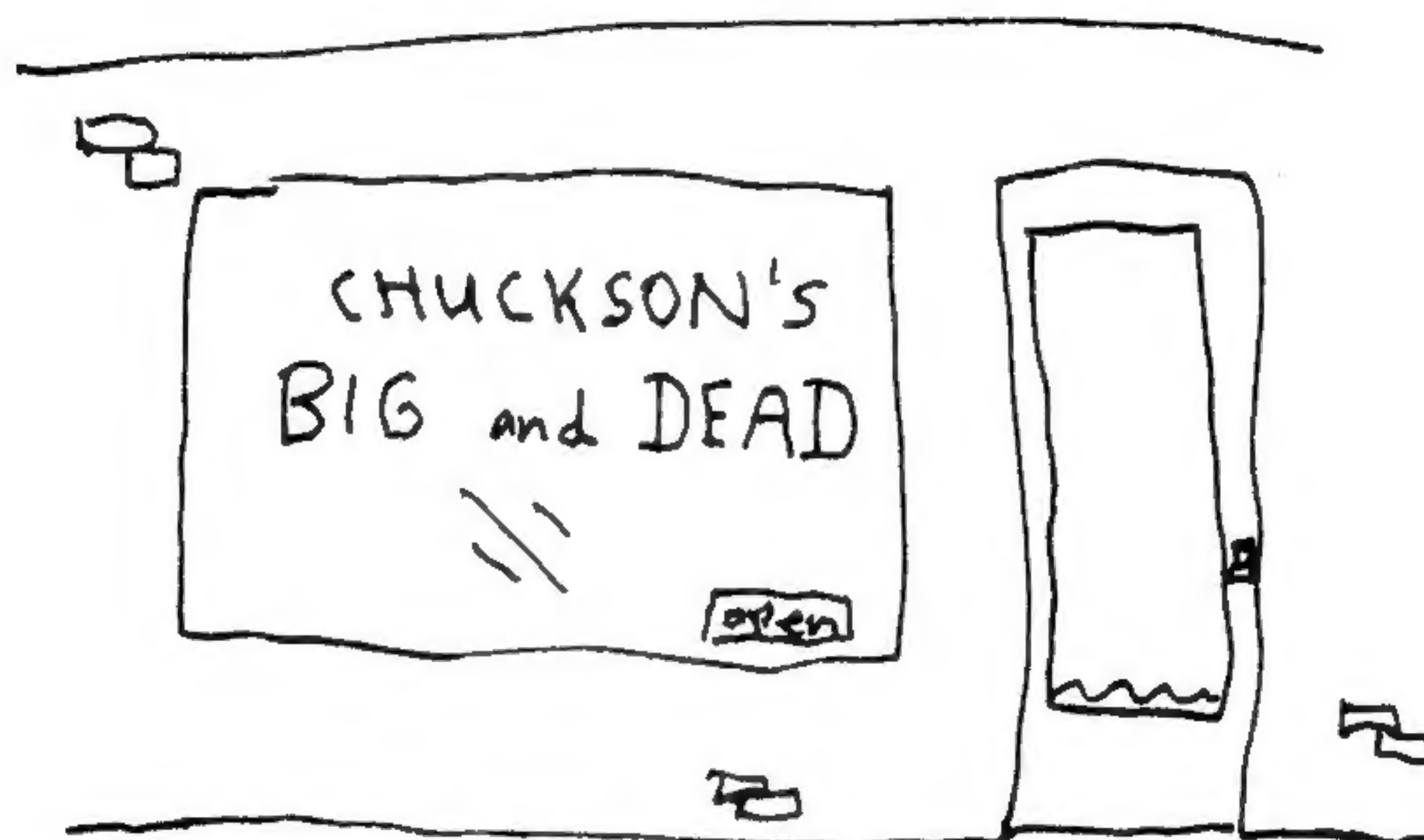
And the lack of attitudes fostered by officials war President's from even his own arms-and- with Tehran both inside and

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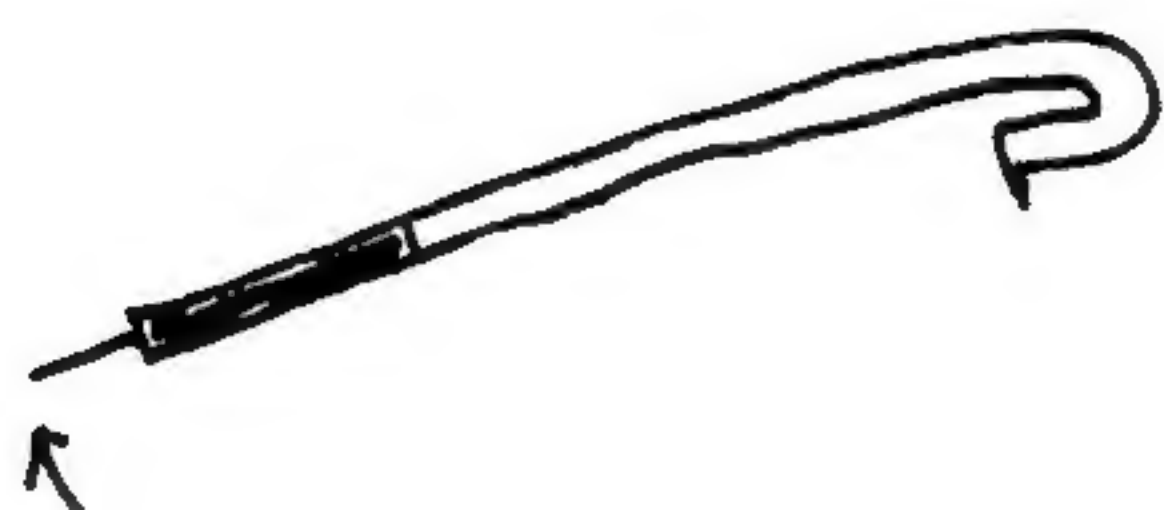


John Callahan's

questionable  
GOODS  
SERVICES



"CHUCKSON'S BIG AND DEAD"  
(a clothing store for OVER-SIZED  
deceased men)



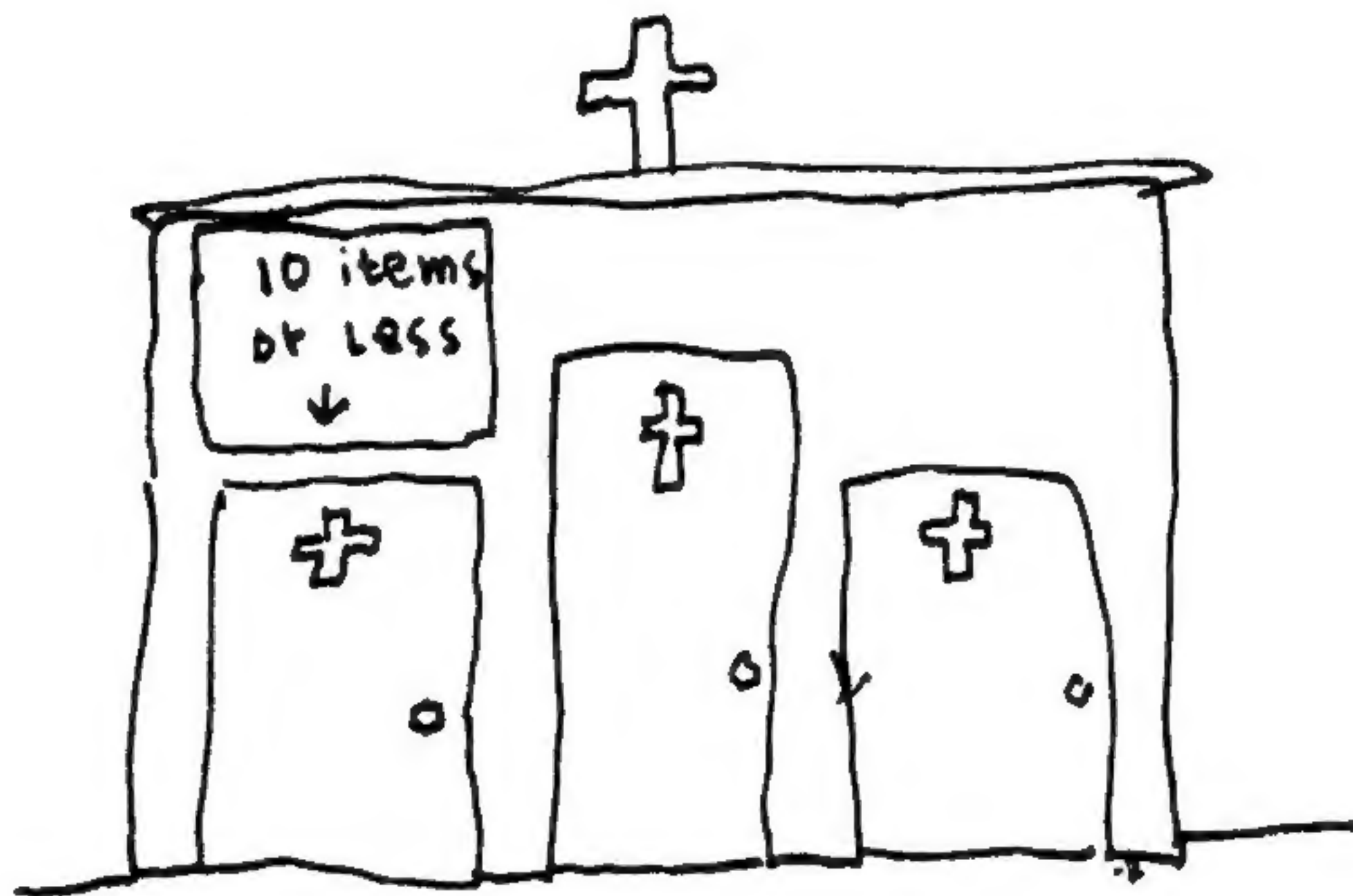
"THE LITTER-BE-GONE BLIND CANE

(a sharp nail protrudes from  
the end of the blind cane which  
snares bits of refuse as the  
sightless person taps along the street.)

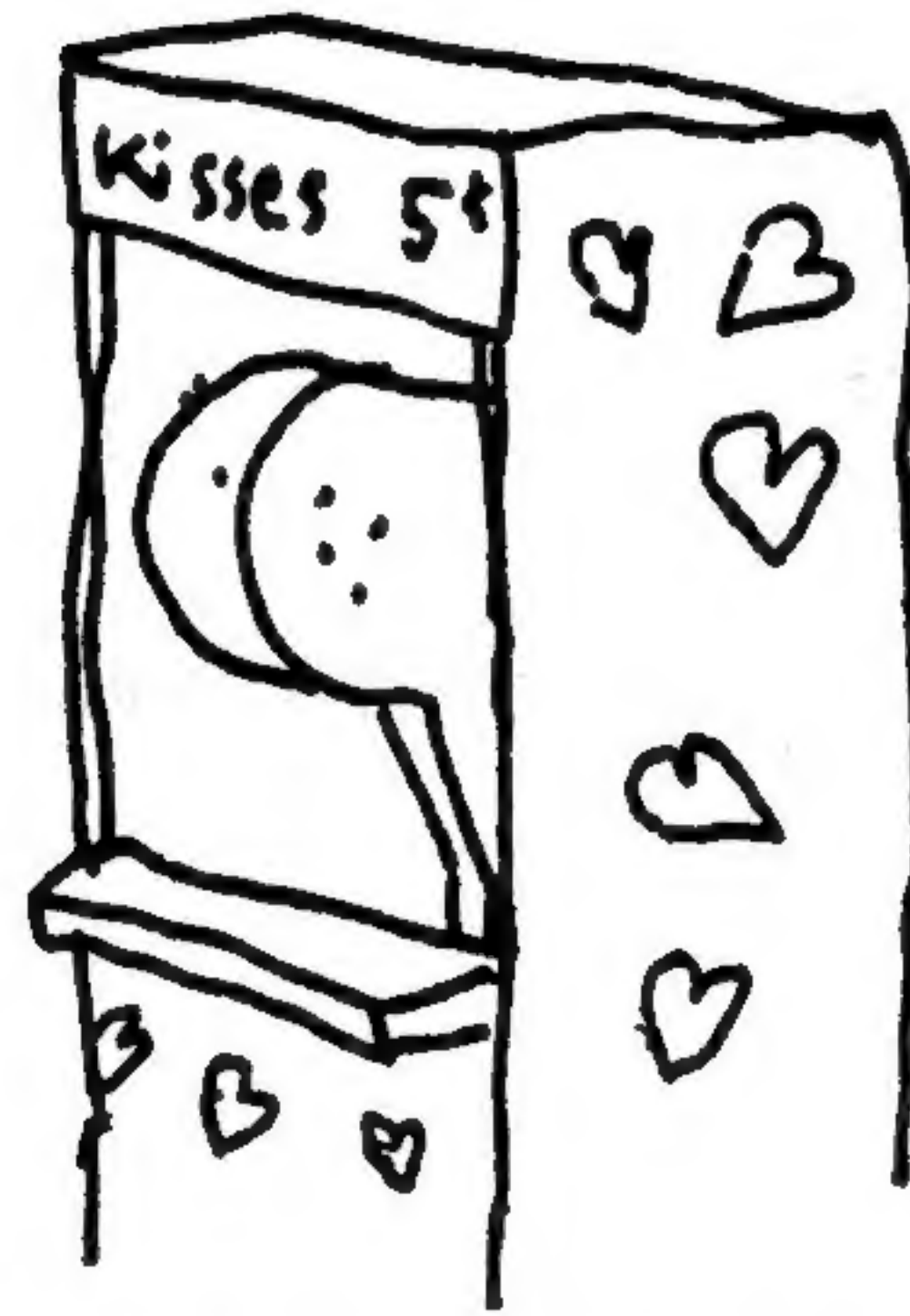


"WITHDRAWING FOR DOLLARS"

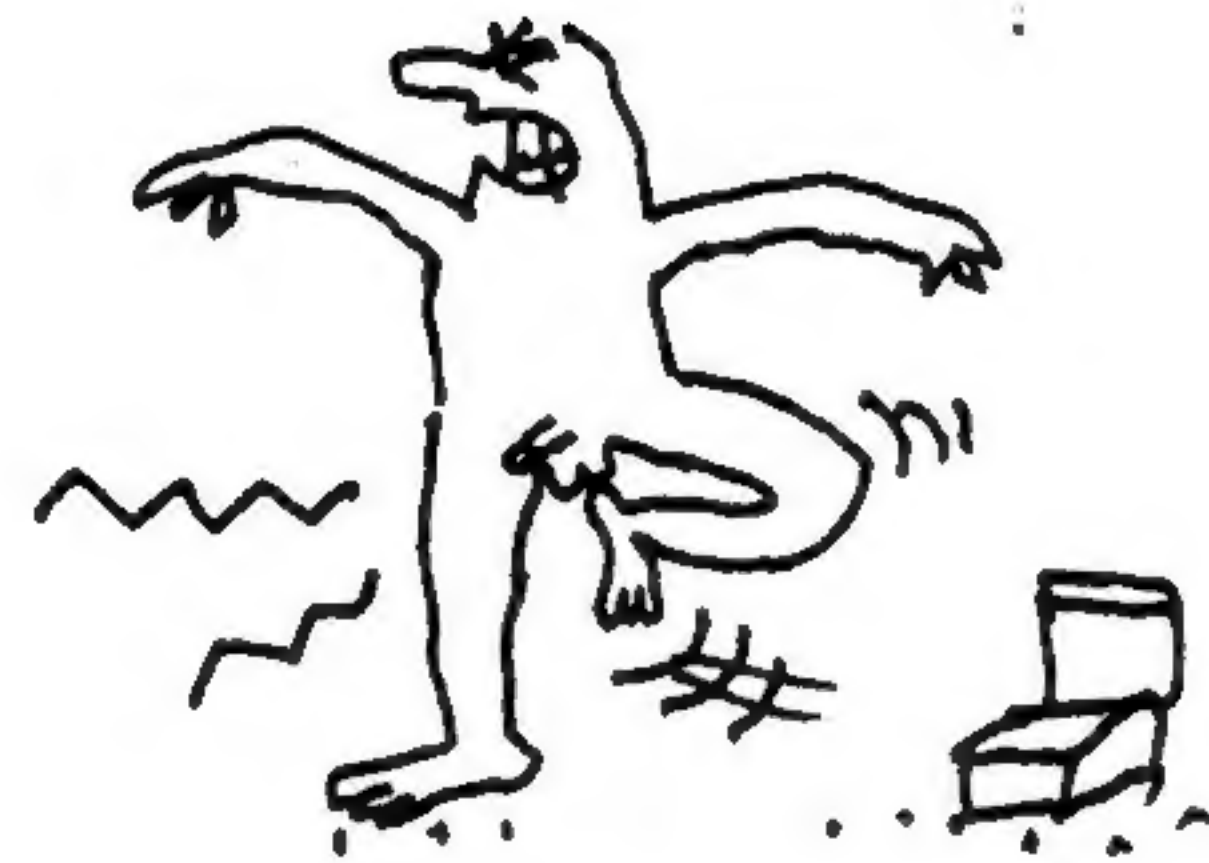
(a T.V. Game show in which con-  
testants were timed as  
they withdrew from addictive  
drugs).



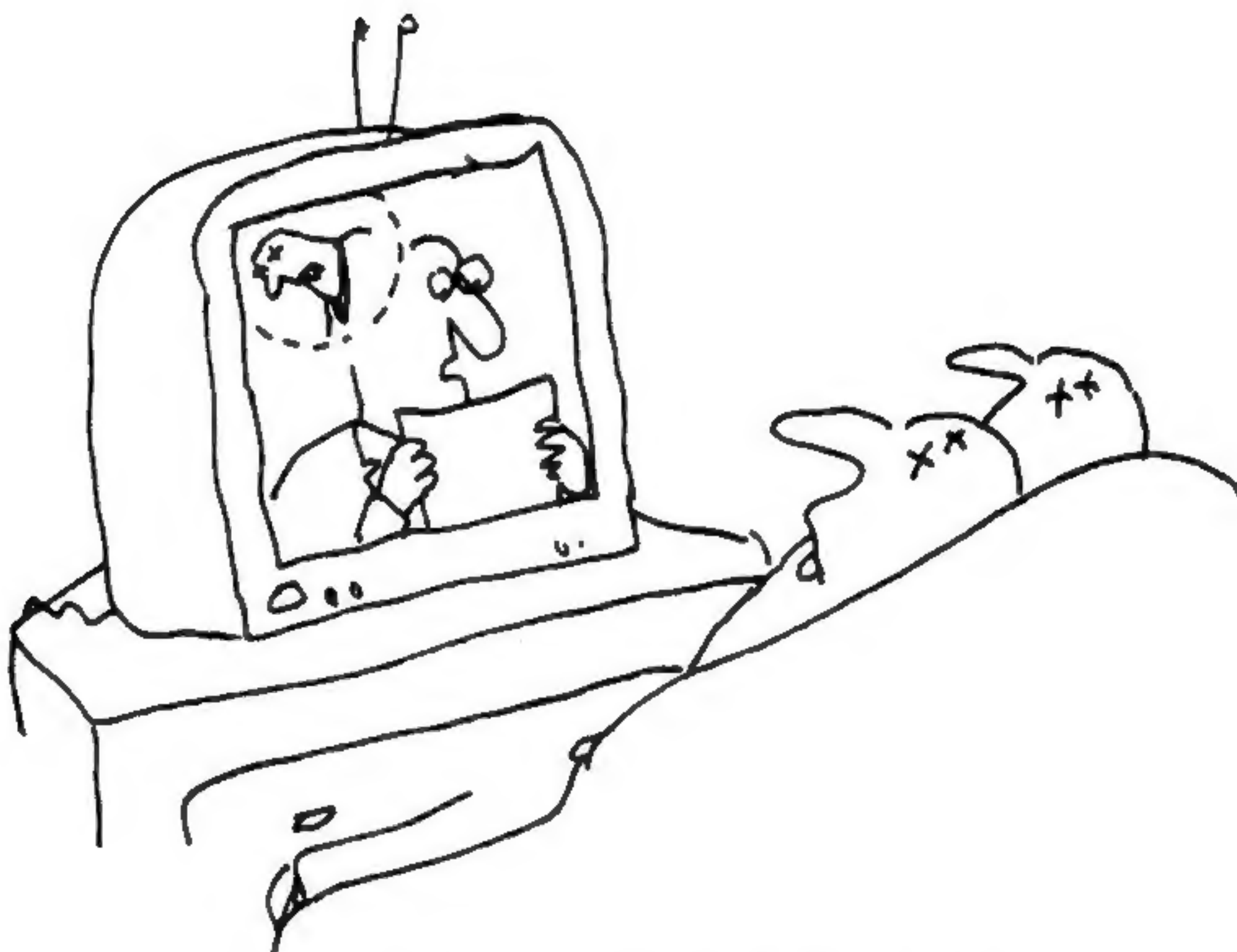
"THE EXPRESS-LANE CONFESSIONAL"



"THE LOW SELF-ESTEEM KISSING BOOTH"



THE "AU NATURELE HACKYSACK KIT"  
(a hackysack kit which suggested  
that you use your own testicles  
for the game)



"CLOSED-CAPTION T.V. FOR THE DEAD"





### "MR. SUICIDE"

(a kit which includes a .38 caliber revolver and shells, and a modified nazi war helmet so you can safely release that suicidal aggression.)



### "THE ROLL AGAIN GAME"

(a board and dice game in which every square instructs the player to roll the dice again).



### THE "ANOREXIC CAFE"



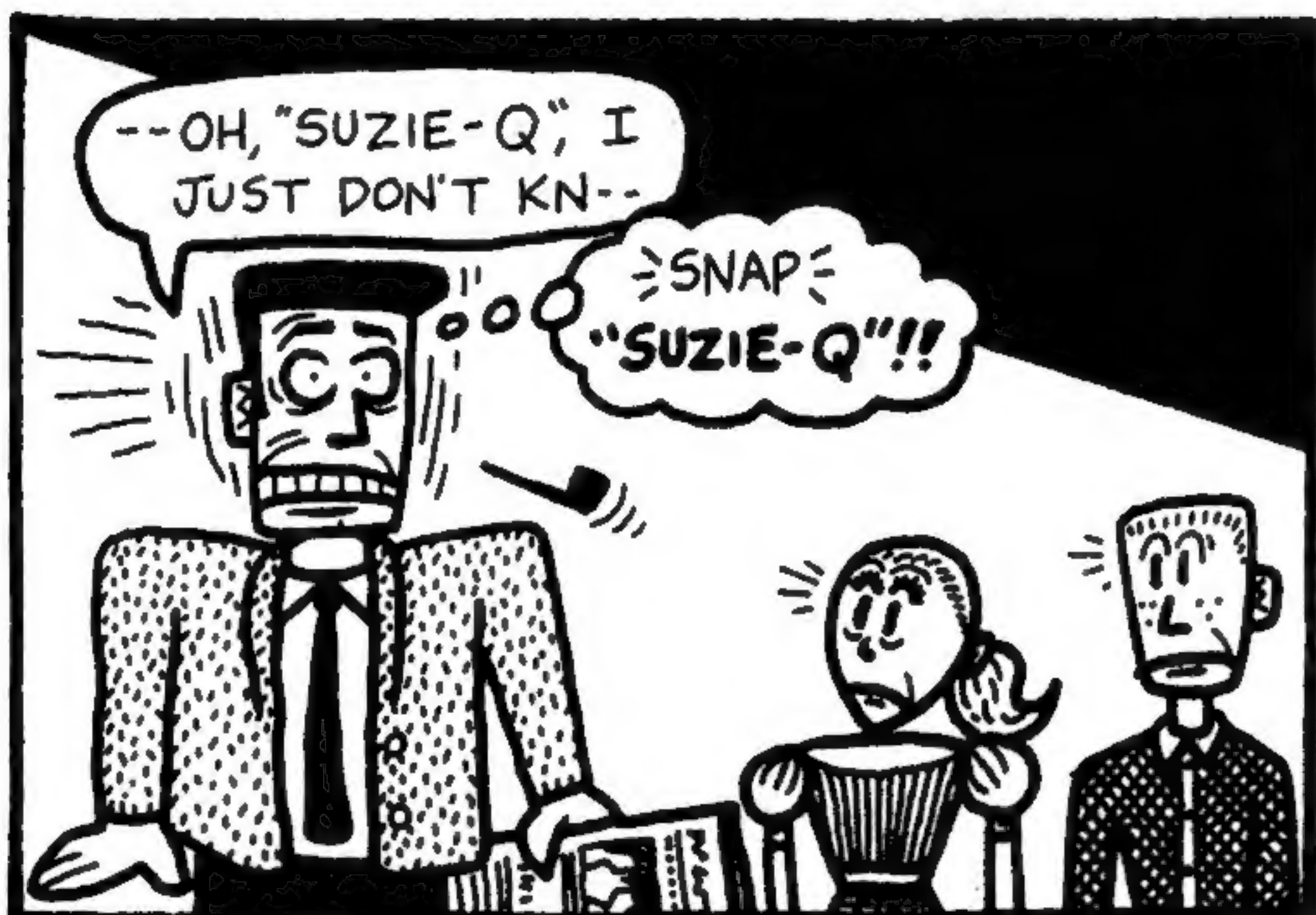
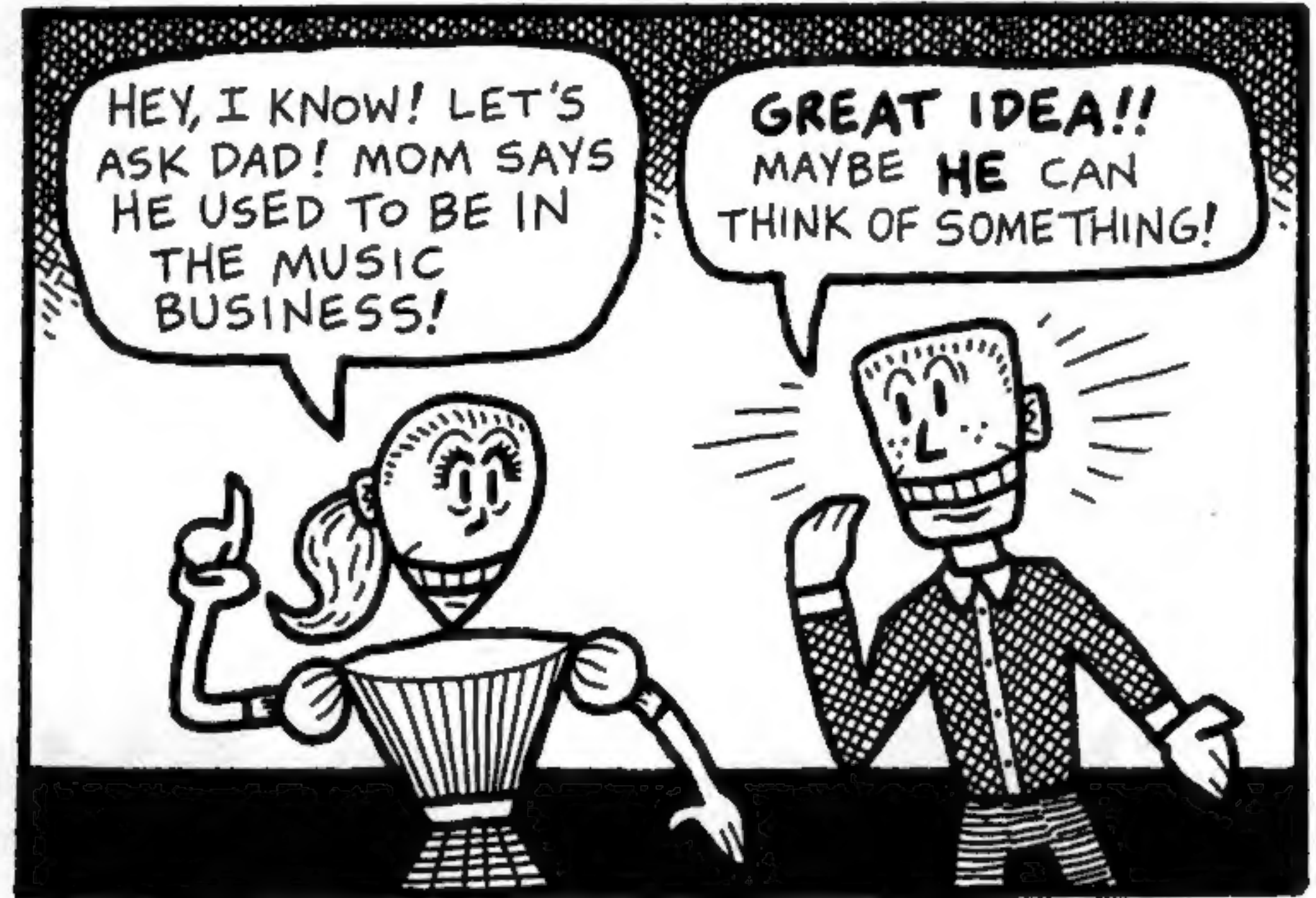
### THE "LEPROSY JUGGLERS"

(a diseased troupe who juggled their own hands).

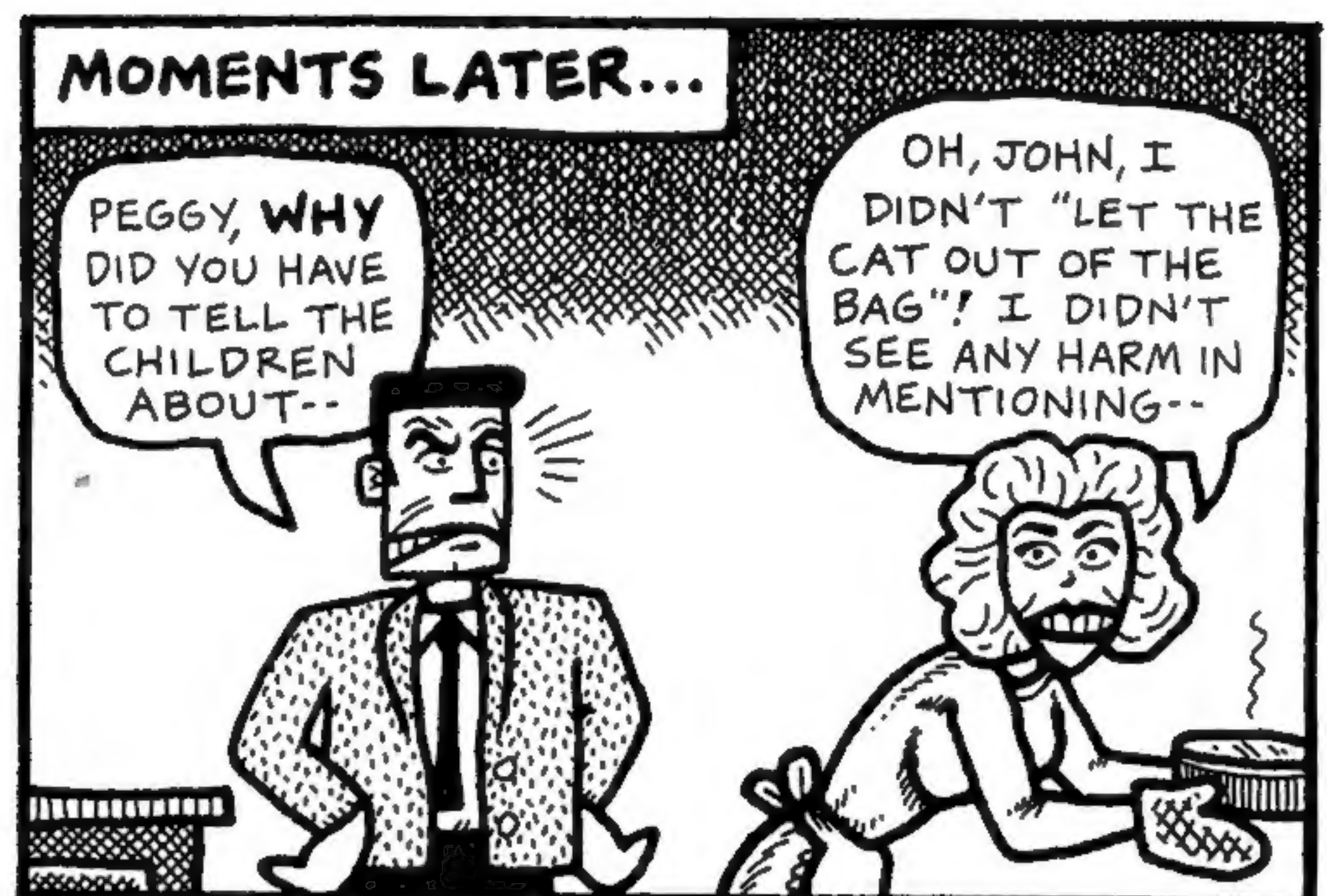


# ROCK & ROLL DAD!

©1986 BY J WILLIAMS









THE NEXT DAY, IN THE OFFICES OF GOLDMAN AND GOLDMAN...

SID! WHERE'RE THOSE CONTRACTS FOR THAT NEW ROCK BAND WE'RE SIGNING?

--YOU MEAN "SATAN'S SLAVES"?

NO, NOT "NATHAN JAMES"-- HE'S THAT "GOSPEL ROCK" ACT WE PICKED UP... I'M TALKIN' ABOUT THAT "HEAVY METAL" GROUP, "SATAN'S SLAVES"!

THAT'S WHAT I SAID! HERE!!

THESE KIDS ARE GONNA BE THE NEXT BIG THING, SID-BABY!

MORTY, I'M TELLIN' YA, YOU GOTTA GET YOUR HEARING CHECKED! YOU BEEN LISTENIN' TO THAT LOUD MUSIC TOO MUCH!

WHADDAYA MEAN? NOTHIN'S WRONG WITH MY EARS! YA JUST GOTTA **SPEAK UP**, THAT'S ALL-- I CAN'T UNNERSTAND YA WHEN YA **MUMBLE**, SID!!

OY VEY.

MEANWHILE...

MORTY MANAGES **NATHAN JAMES**, THE "GOSPEL ROCK" SINGER-- A PERFECT ACT FOR THE CHURCH FUND-RAISER!!

YEAH, GOLDMAN 'N' GOLDMAN... OKAY, JUST A MINUTE--

MORTY! TELEPHONE!!

--AM I "ALONE"? OF **COURSE** I'M ALONE, YOU PUTZ! WHAT, YOU THINK I GOT YOUR **WIFE** IN HERE OR SOME-THIN'?

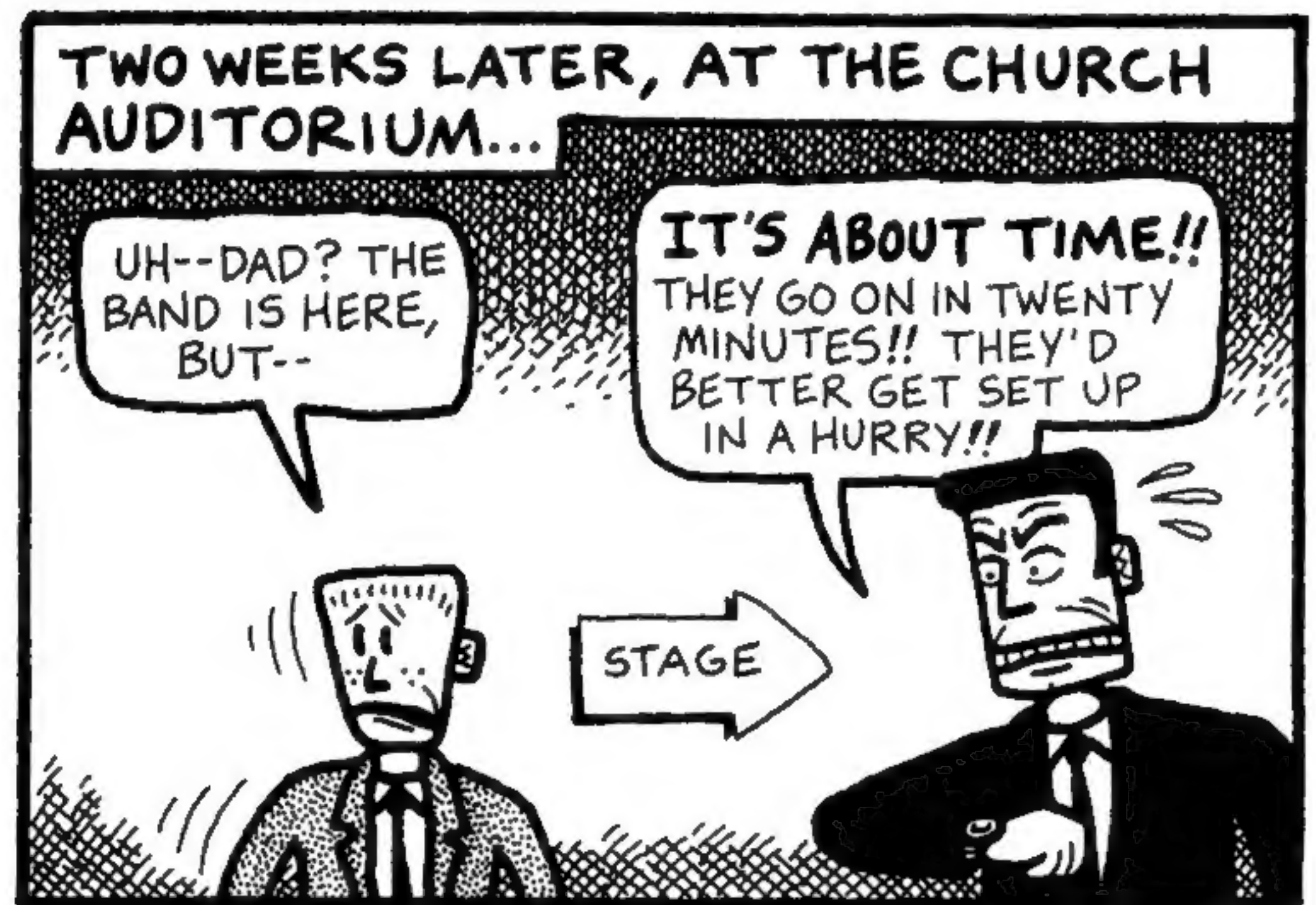
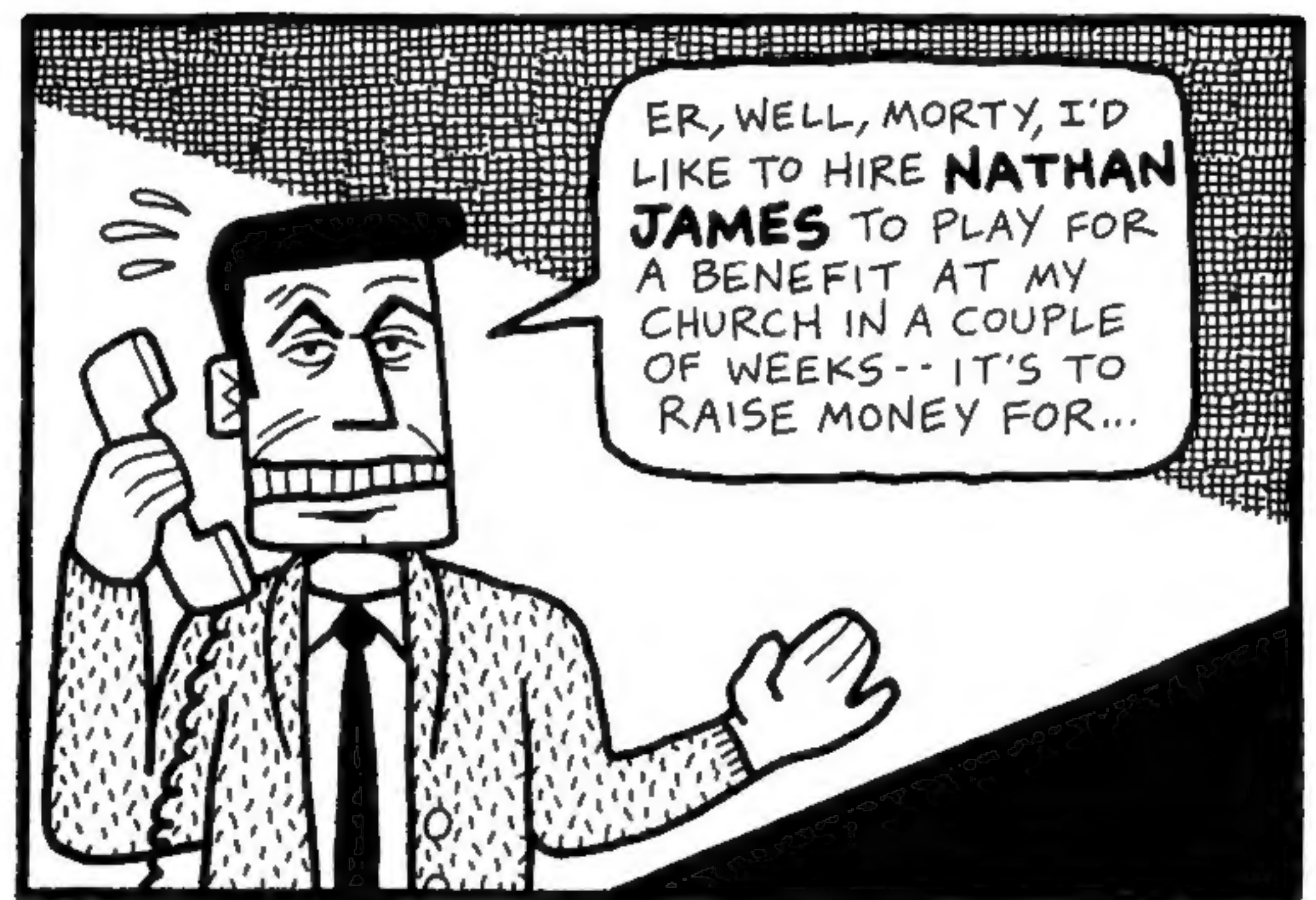
READ MY LIPS, WISE GUY!!  
**TELL-UH-FFONE!!!**

OH, "TELEPHONE"! WHY DIDN'T YA SAY SO?

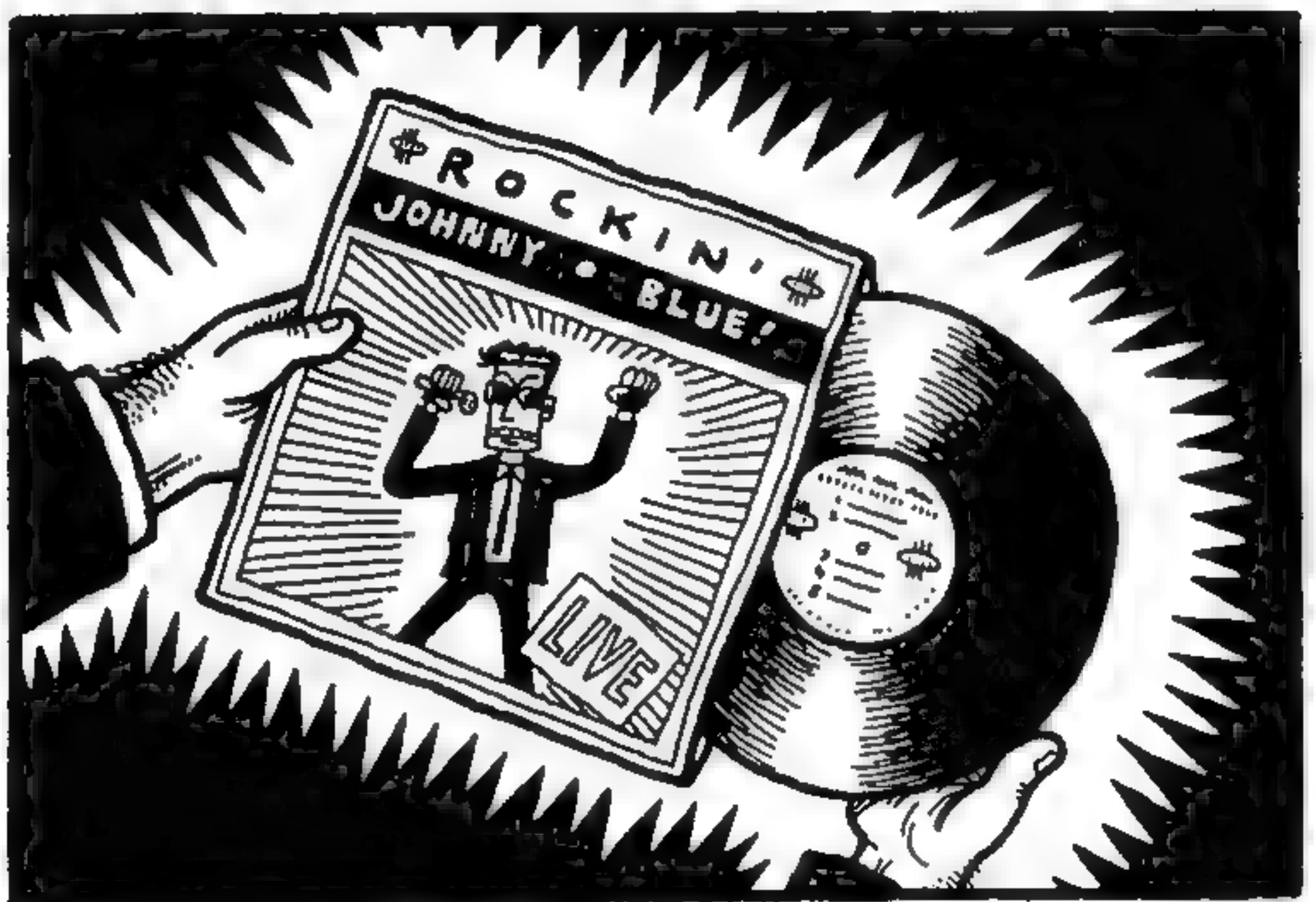
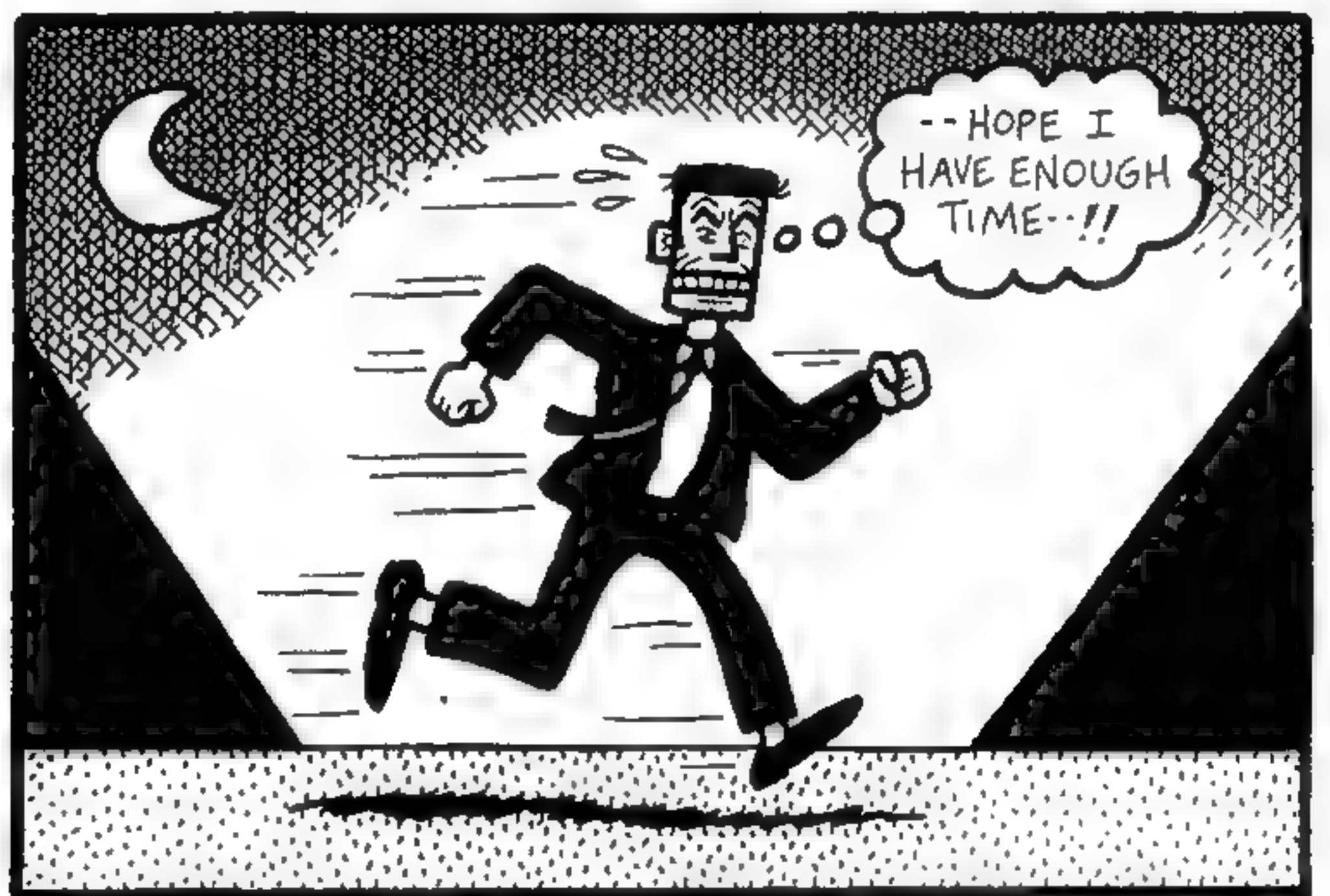
YEAH, THIS IS MORTY, WHO'S THIS? -- **WHO?** SPEAK UP! JOHN **WHAT?** -- JOHN BLUE? WAITAMINUTE, THAT NAME'S FAMILIAR...

--OH, YEAH!!  
NOW I REMEMBER!!



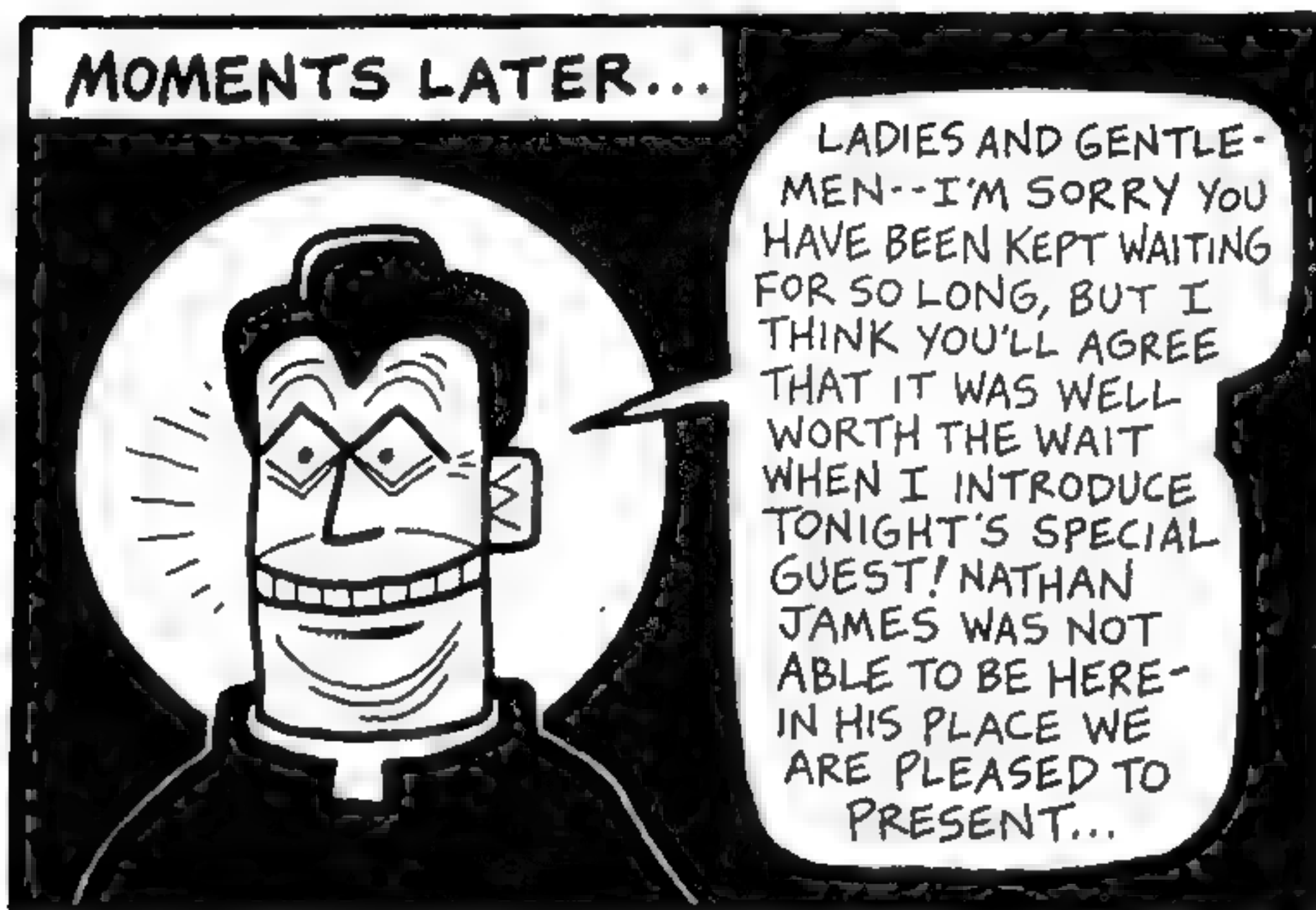
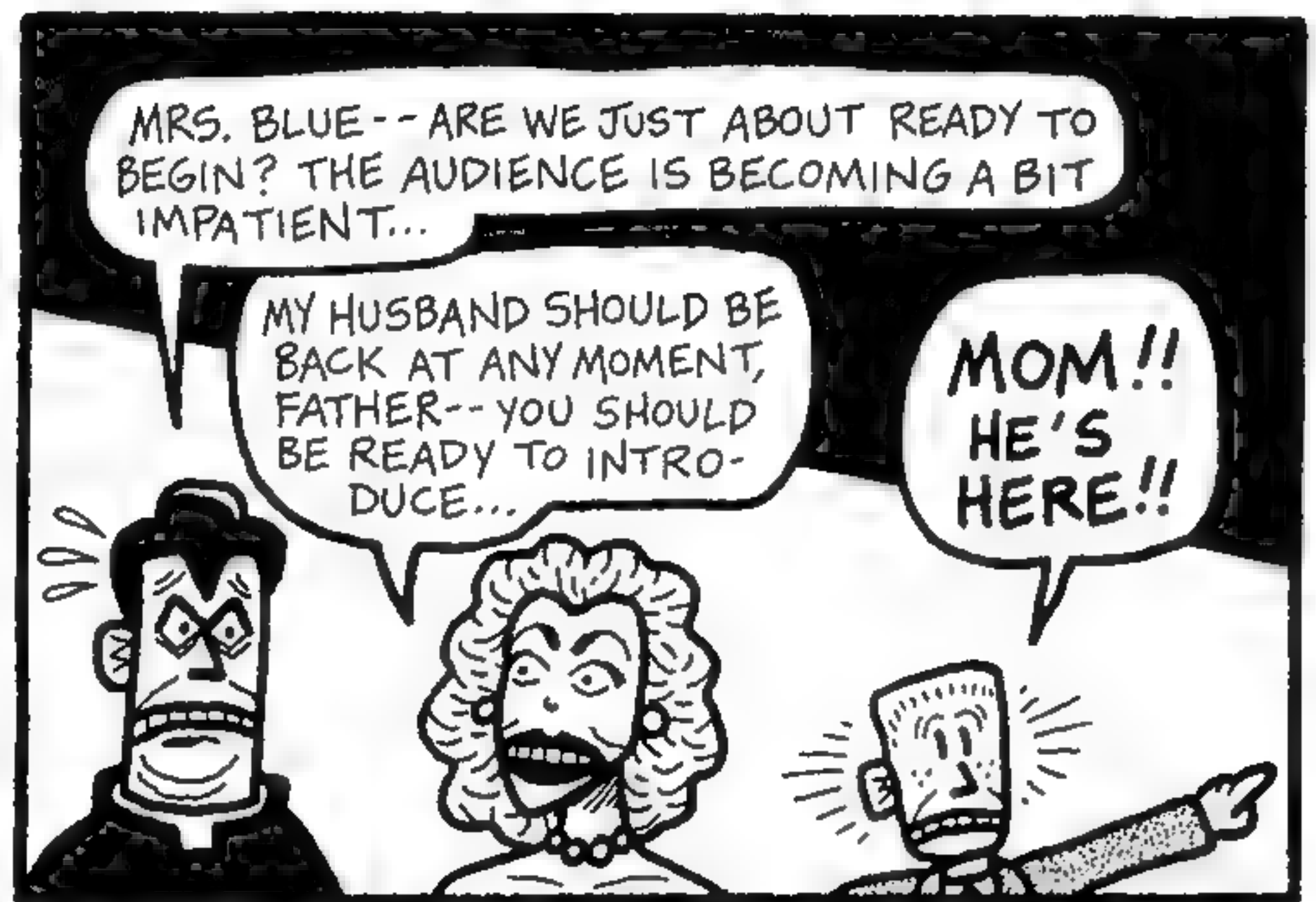








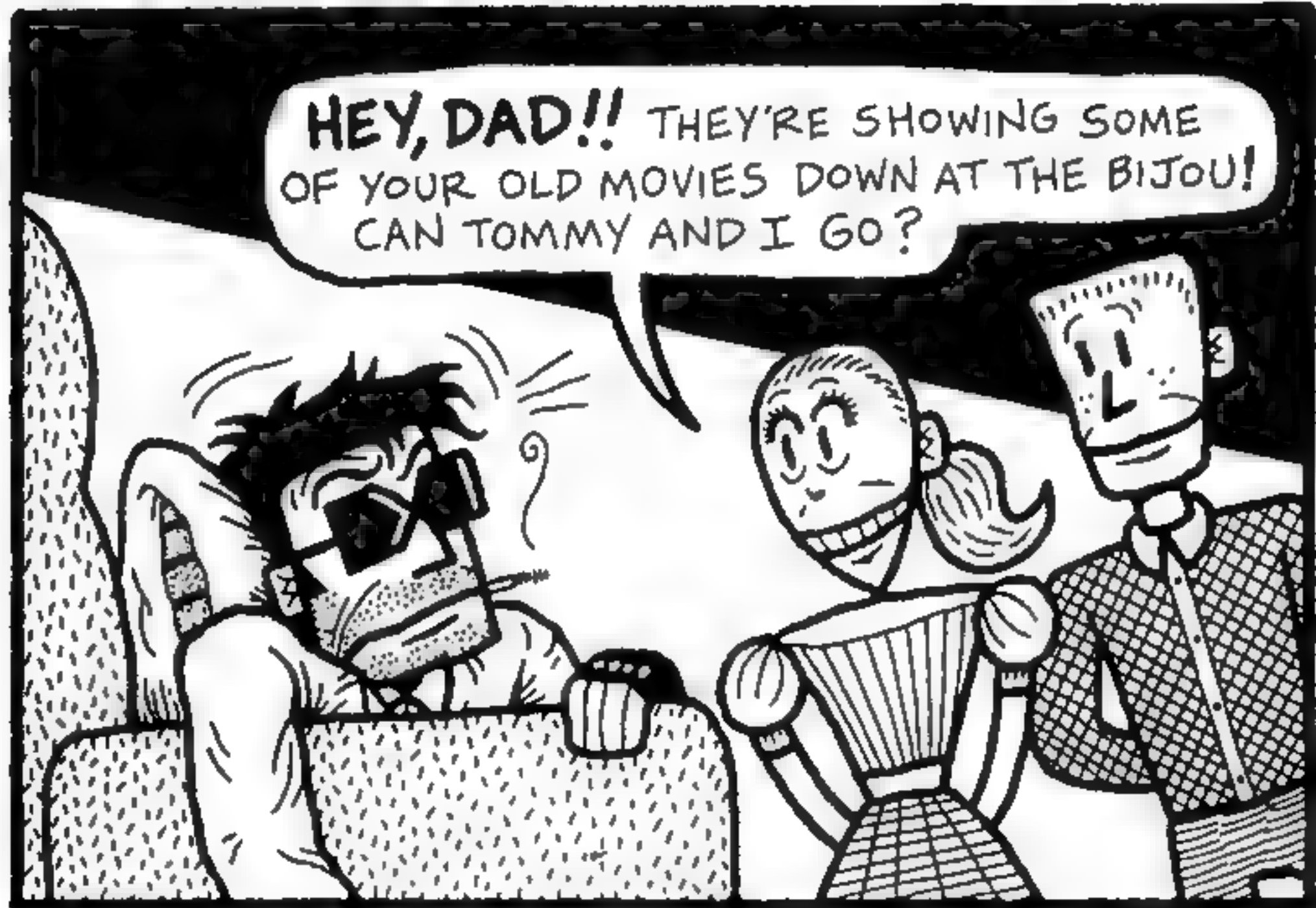
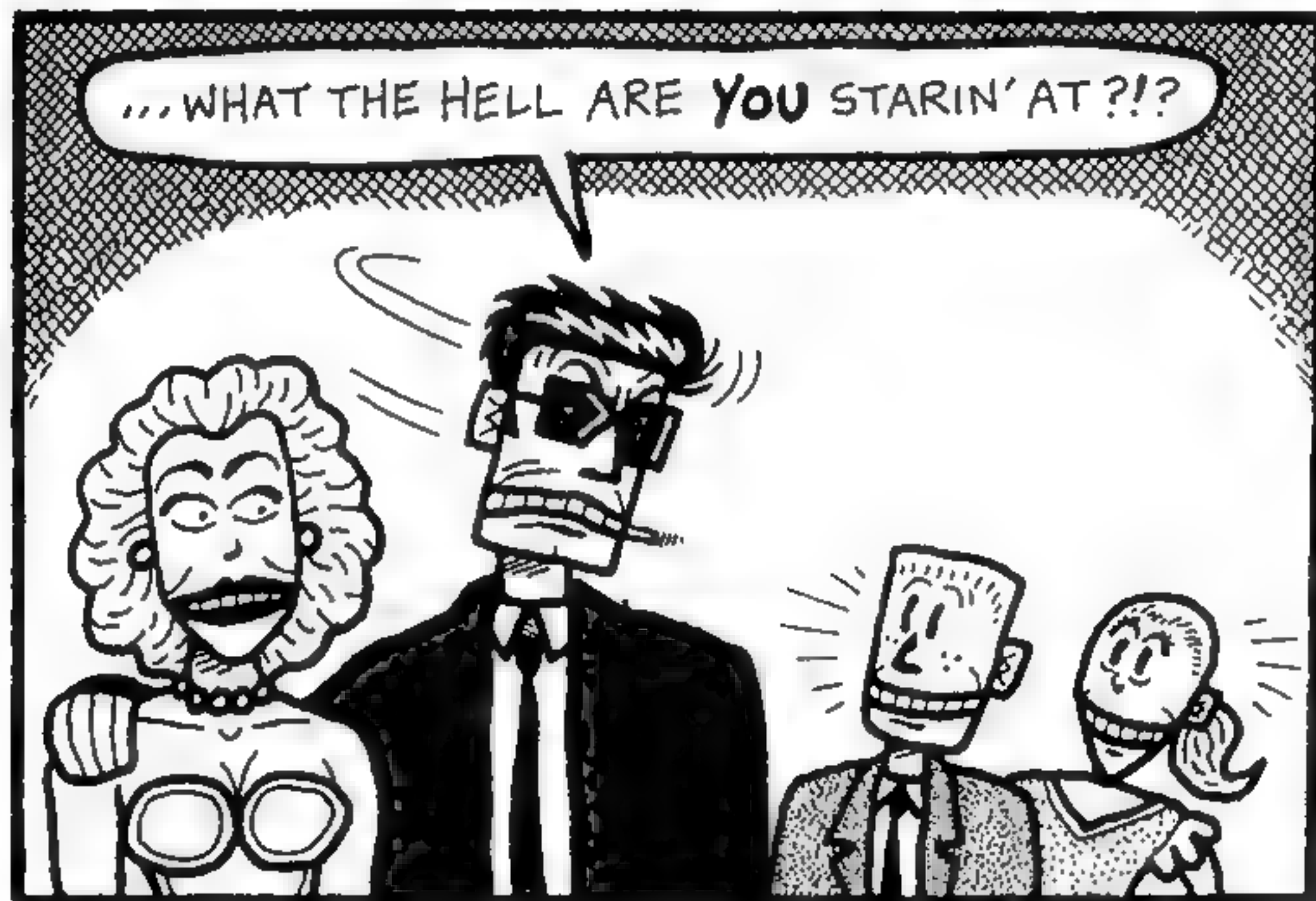
BACK AT THE CHURCH AUDITORIUM...



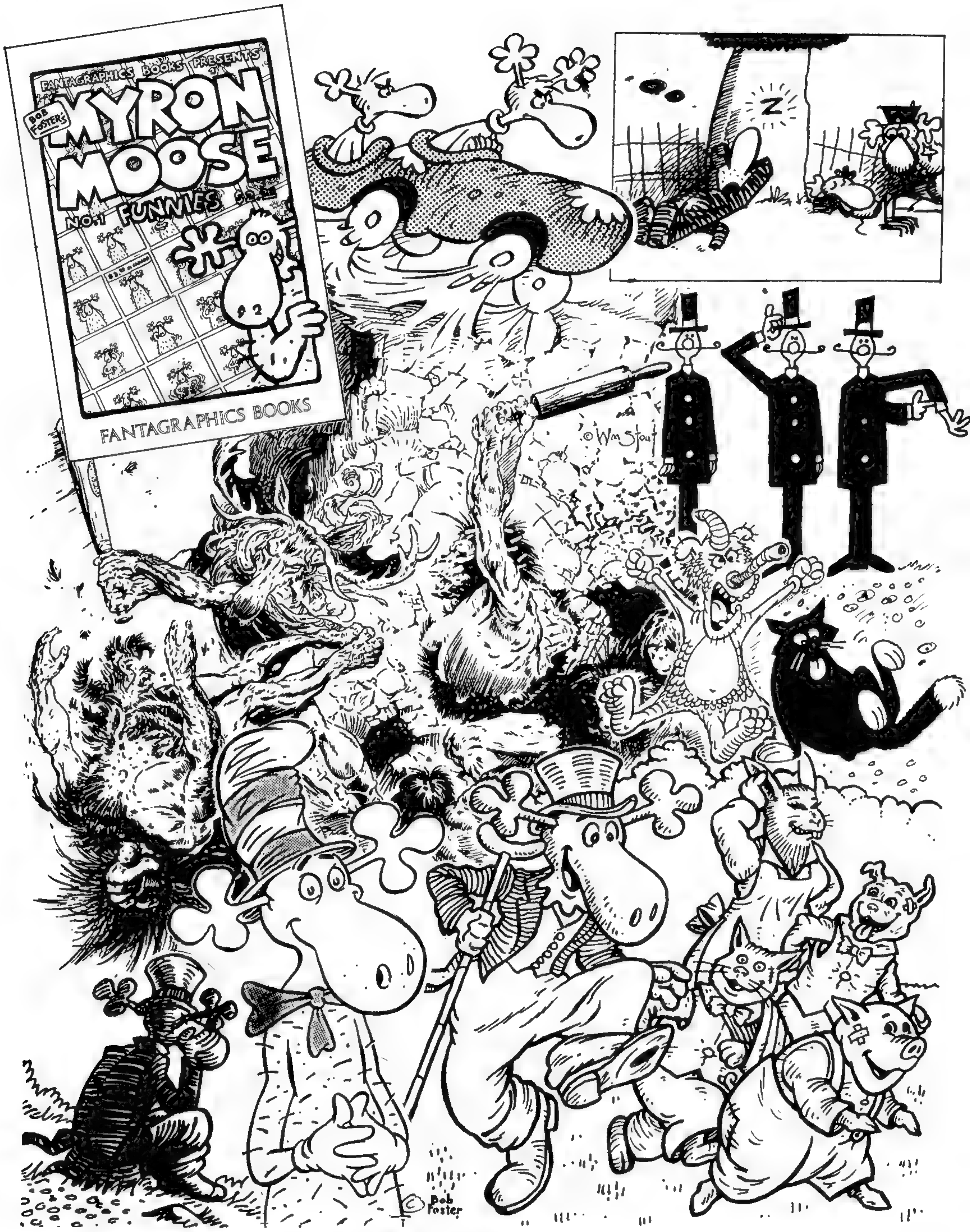




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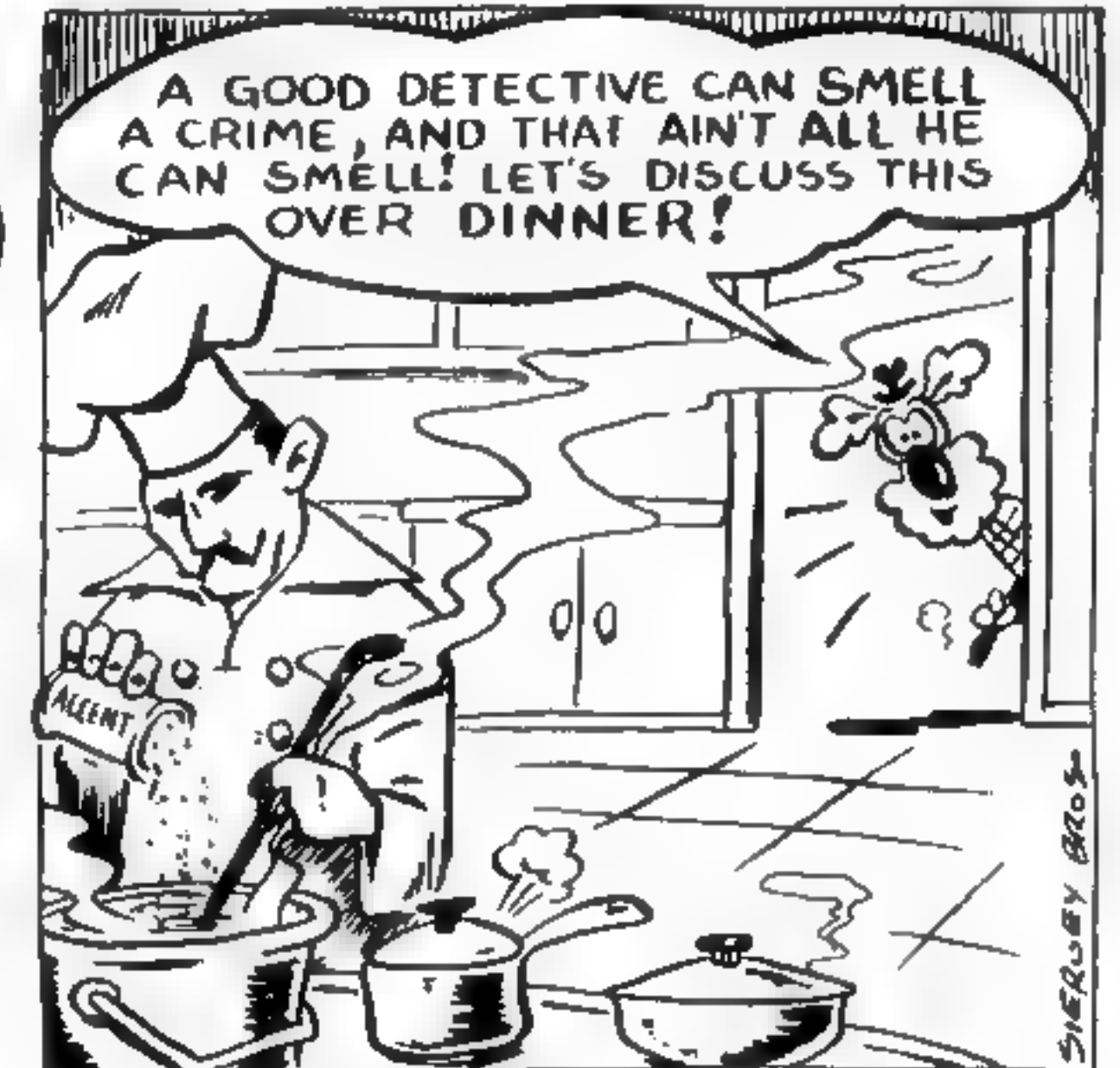


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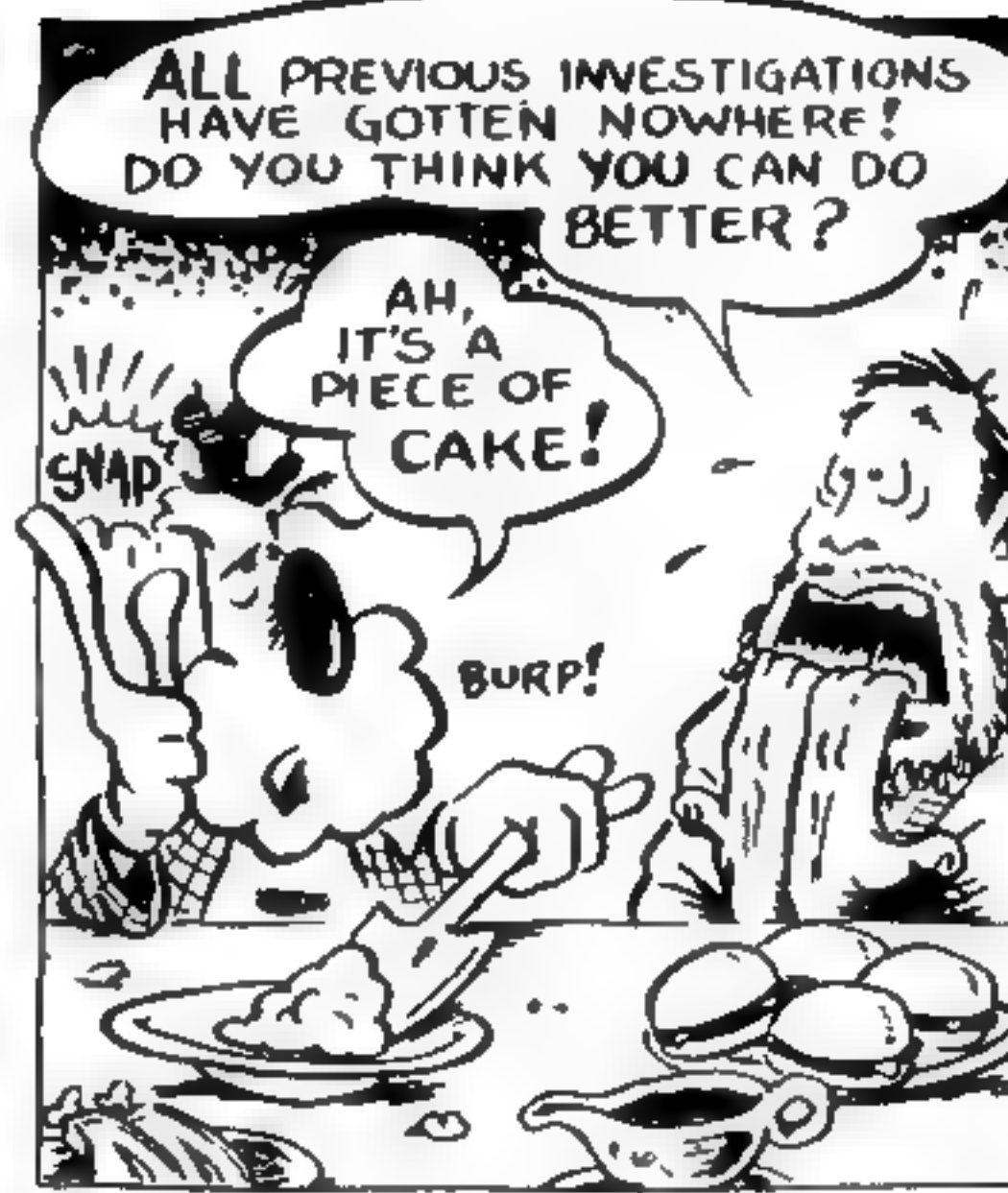


# KAT MANNO

by SIERGEY BROS. ©1987







KOALA LUMPUR GETS THE JOB AND SETS UP A STAKE OUT OVER G.I. GOTTA LOTTA'S LAST REMAINING ORIENTAL CARPET....



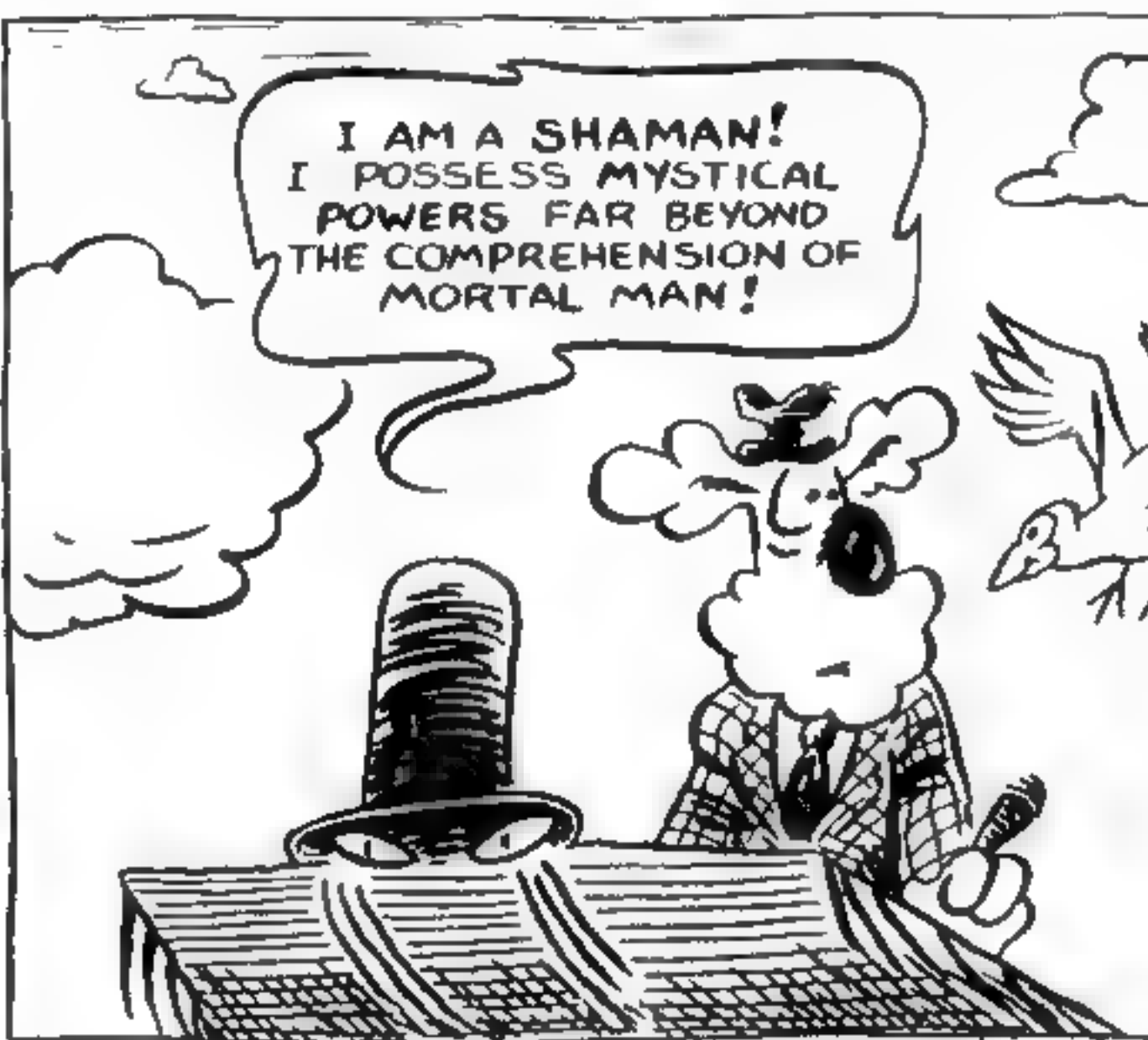
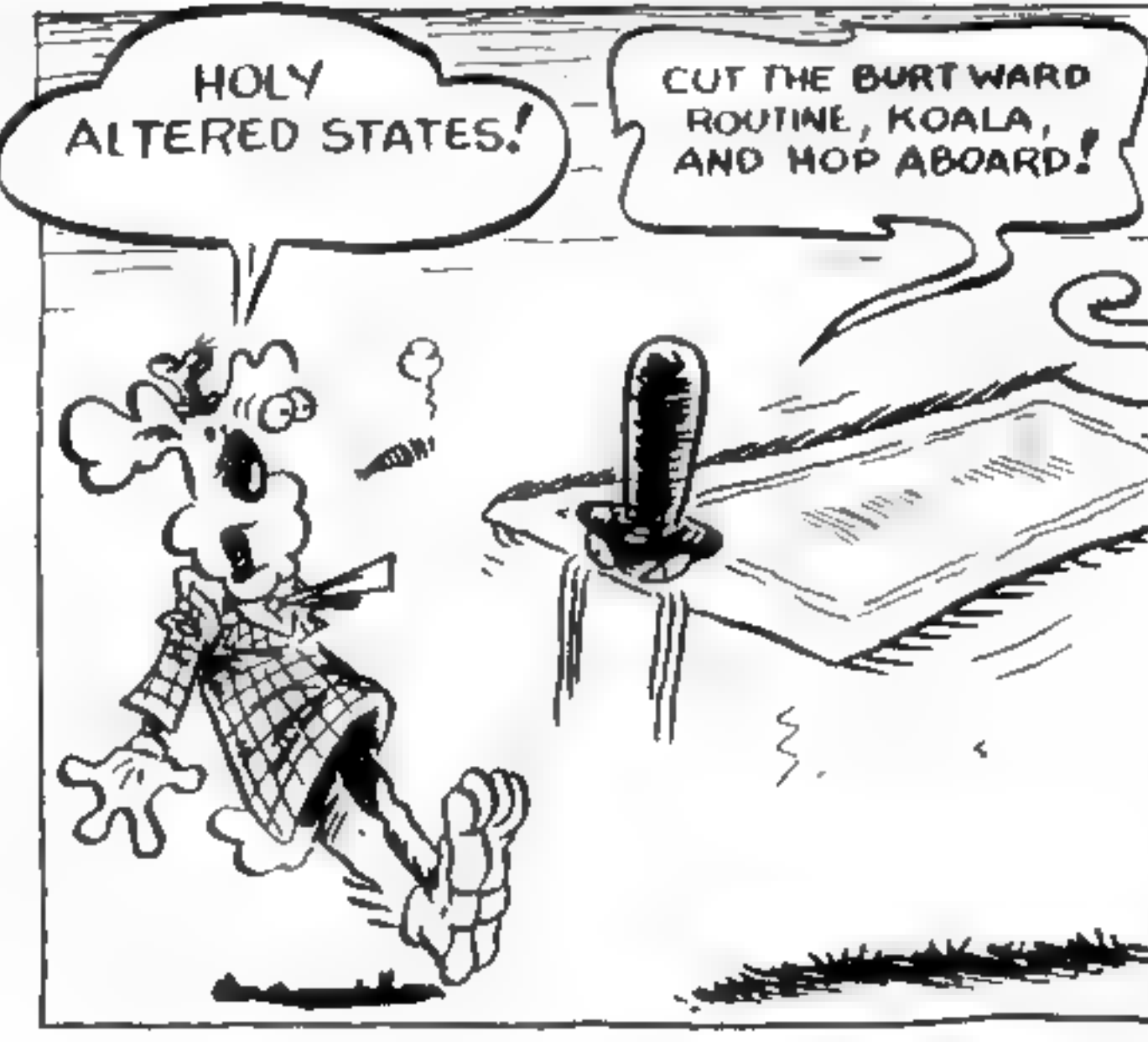
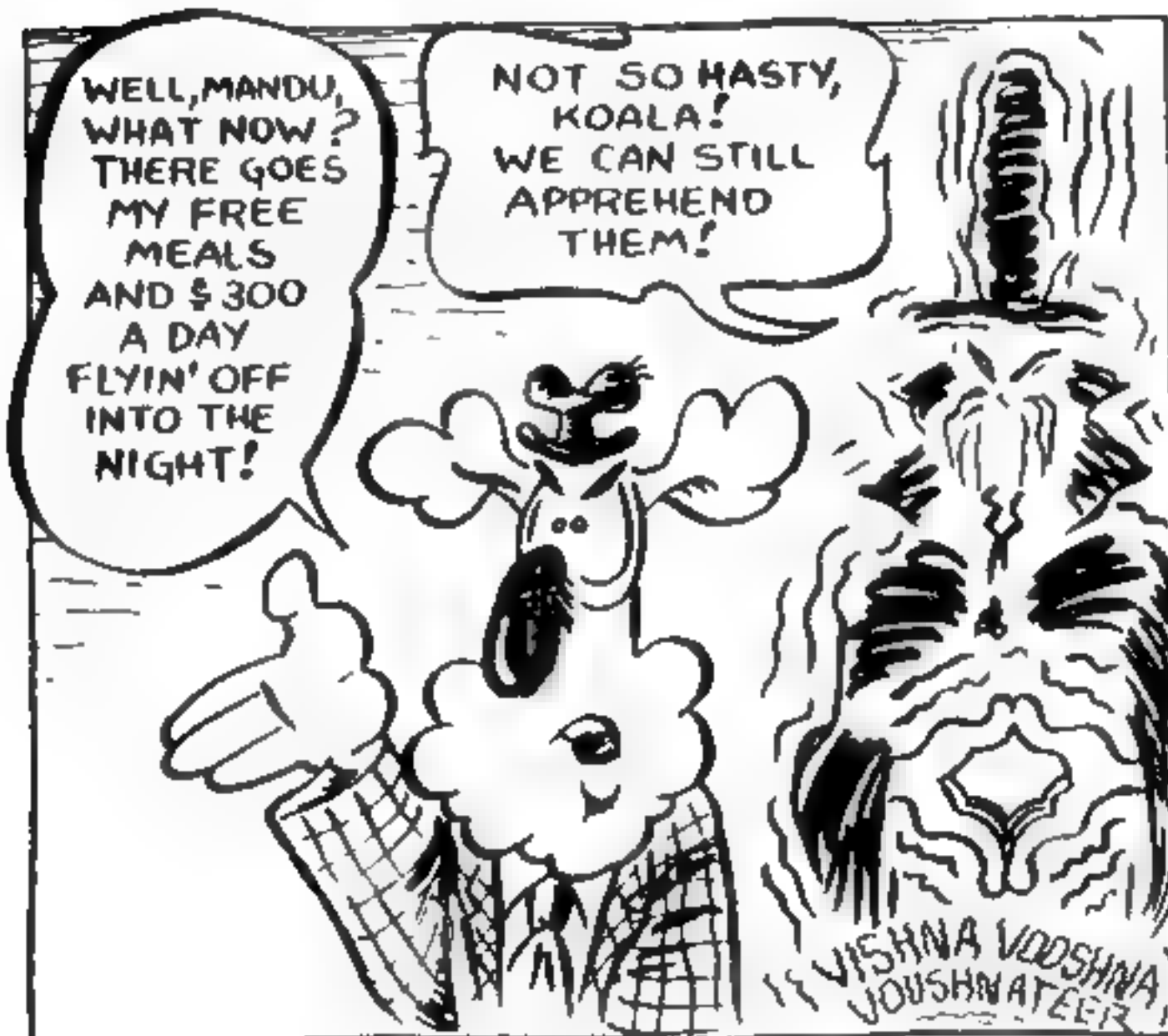
SUDDENLY, AS IF BY MAGIC, TWO FIGURES APPEAR IN THE ROOM



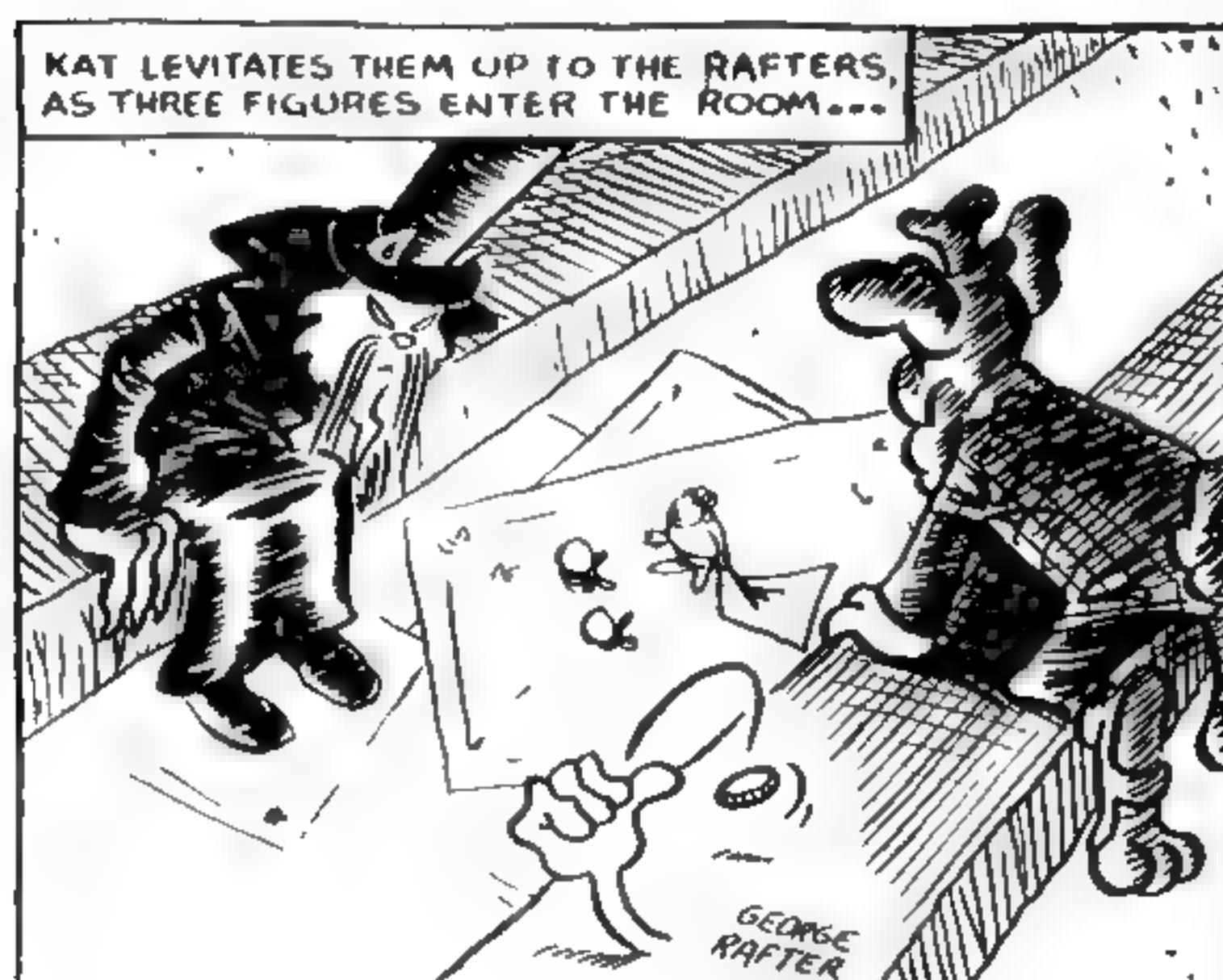
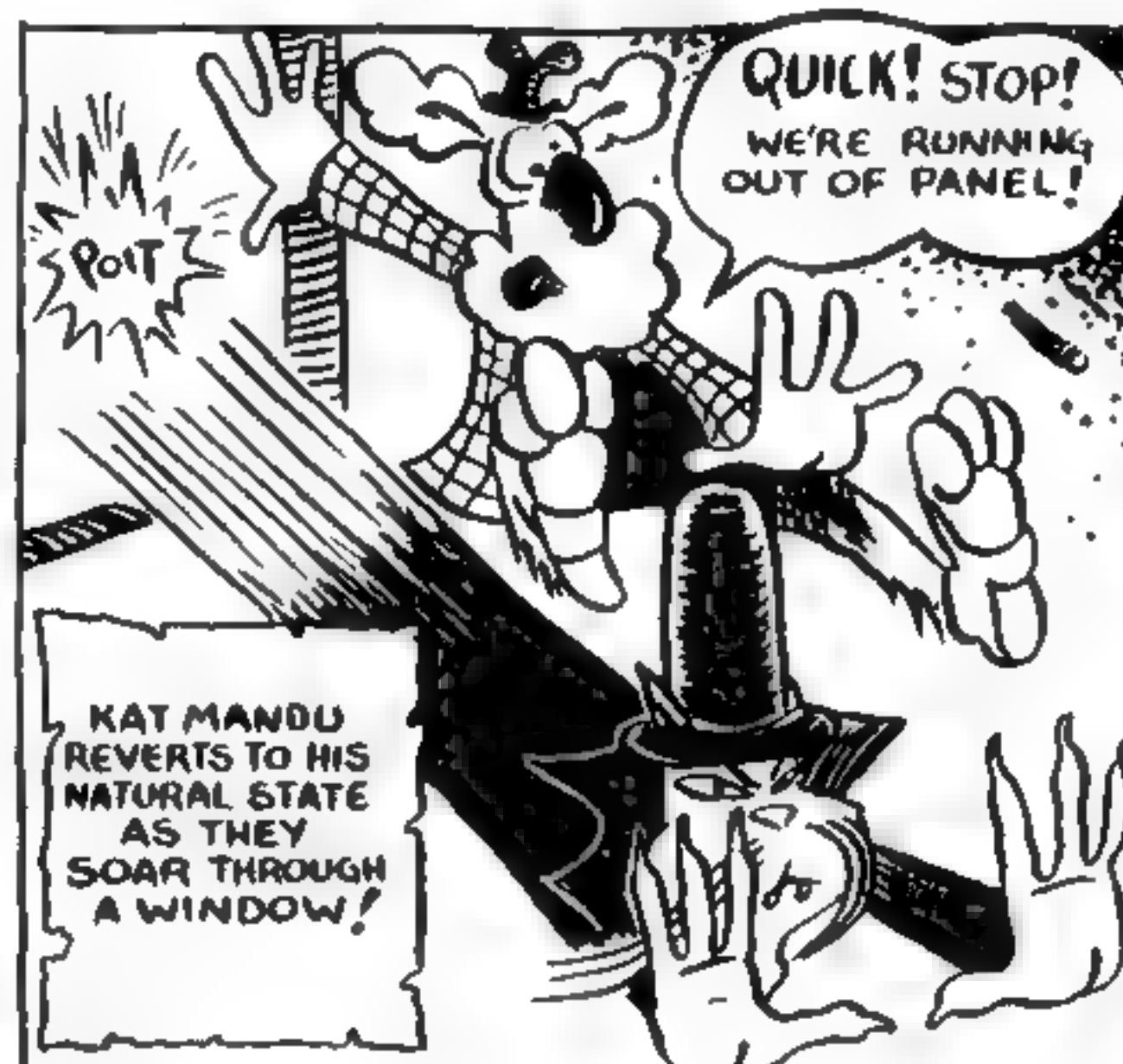
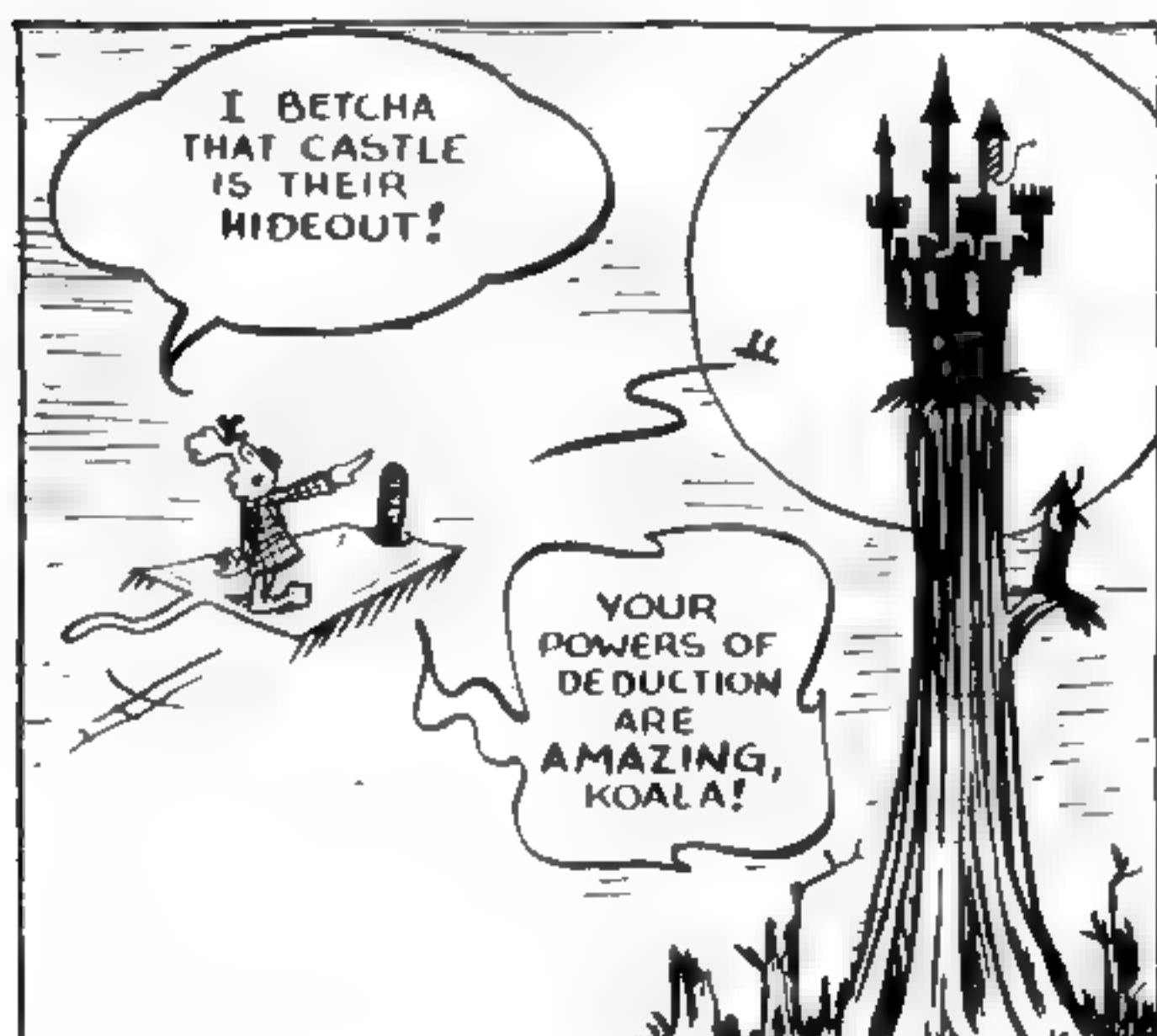
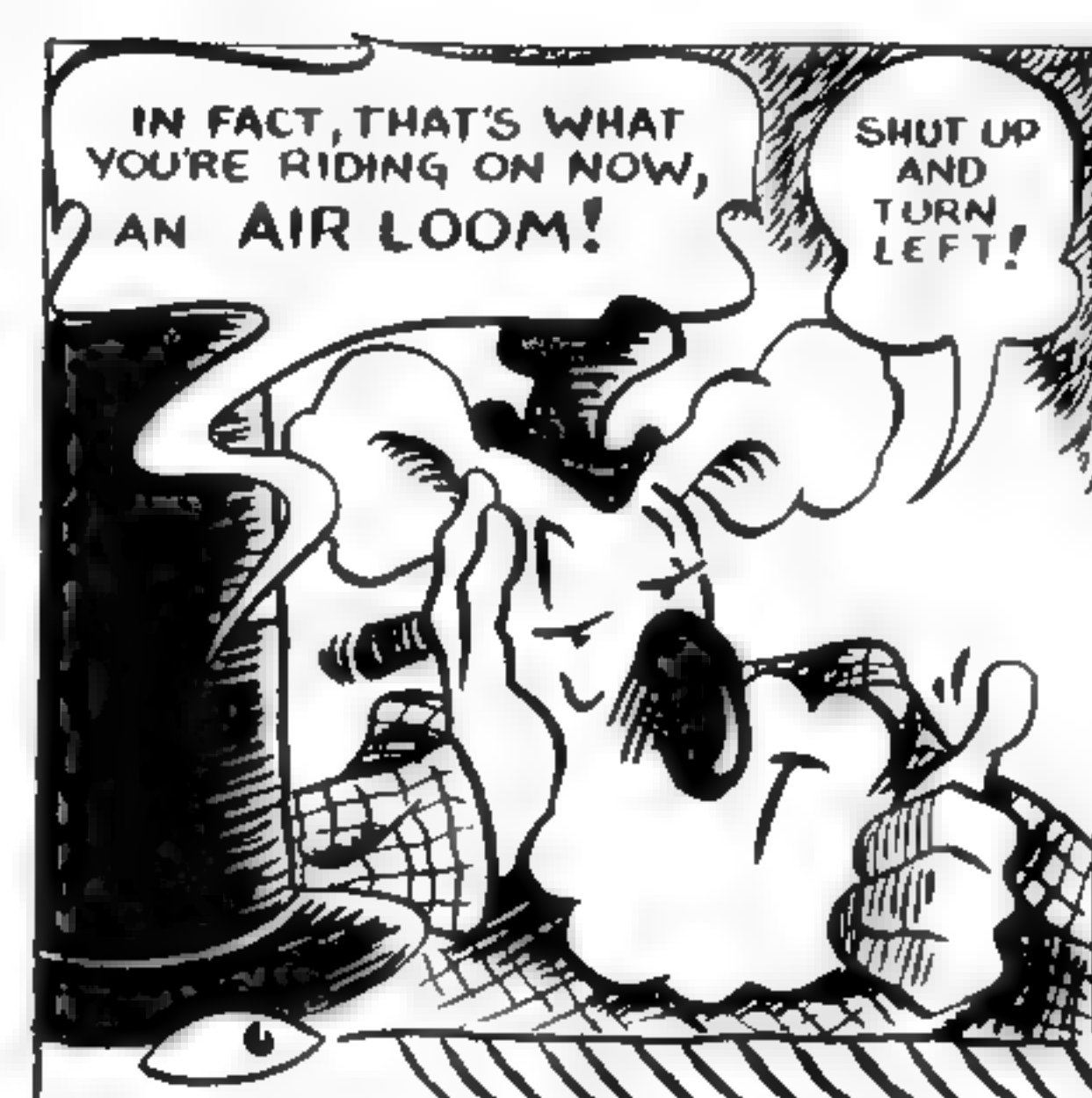
KOALA AWAKENS FROM A BAD DREAM AS...



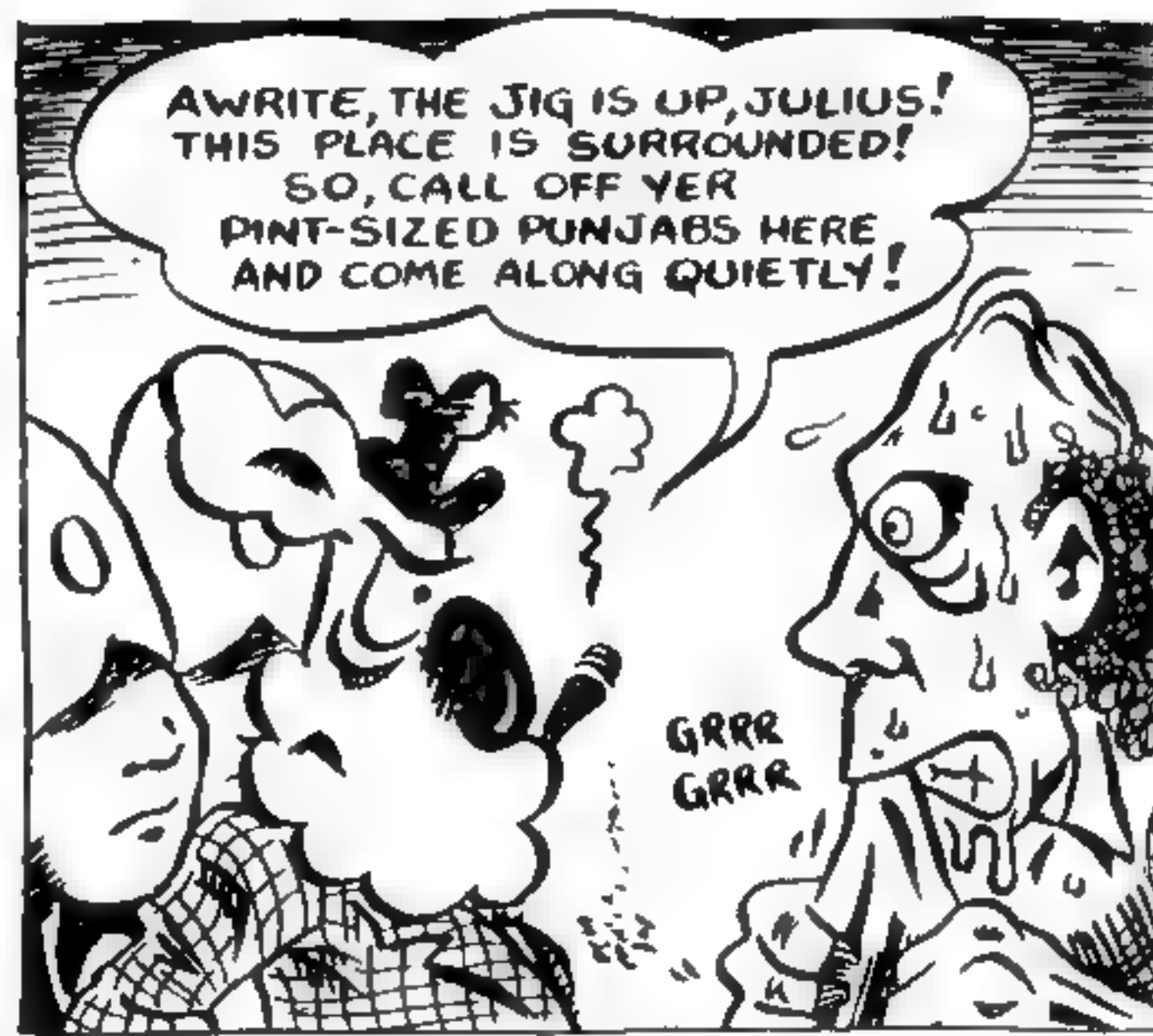
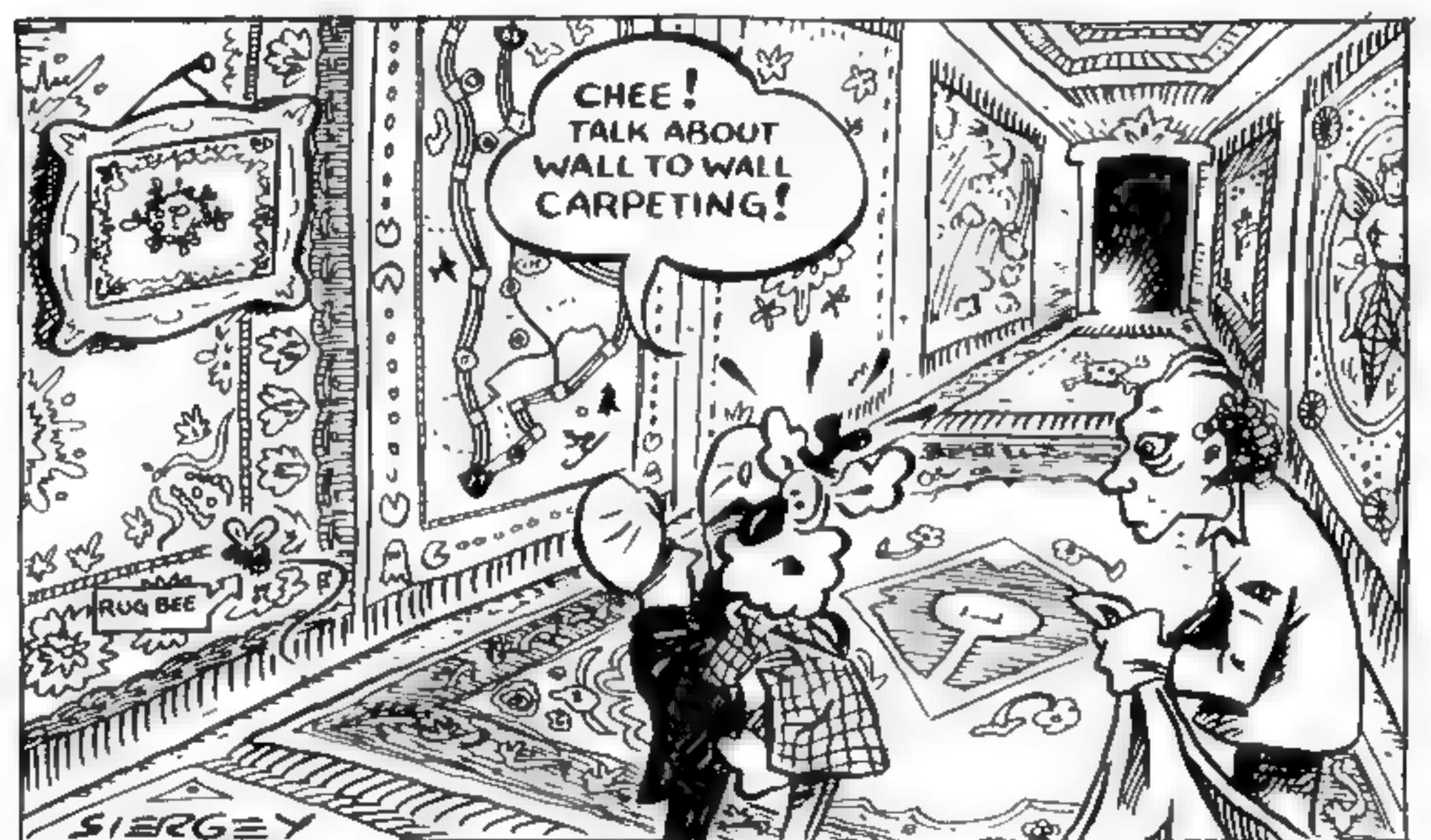
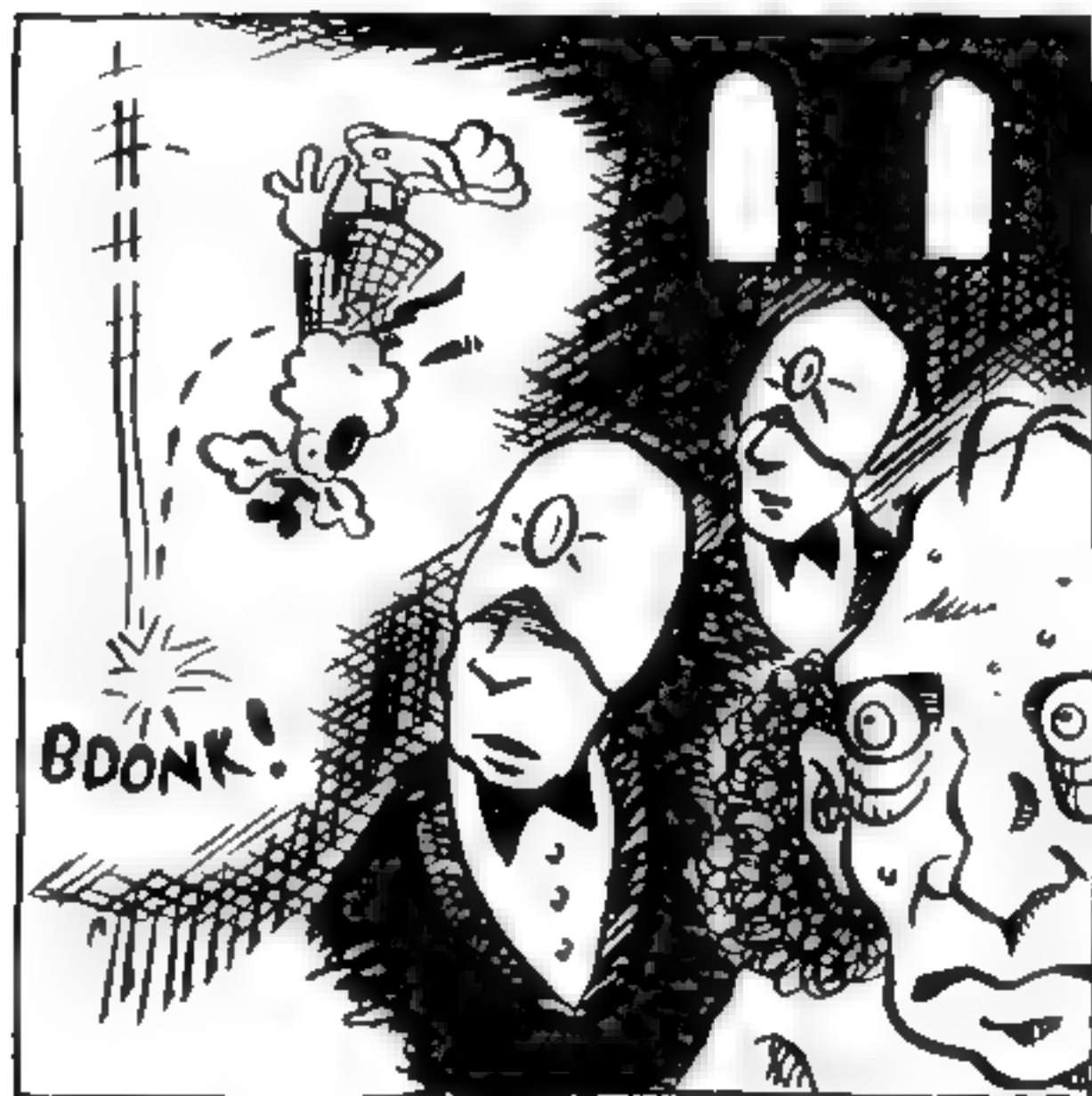
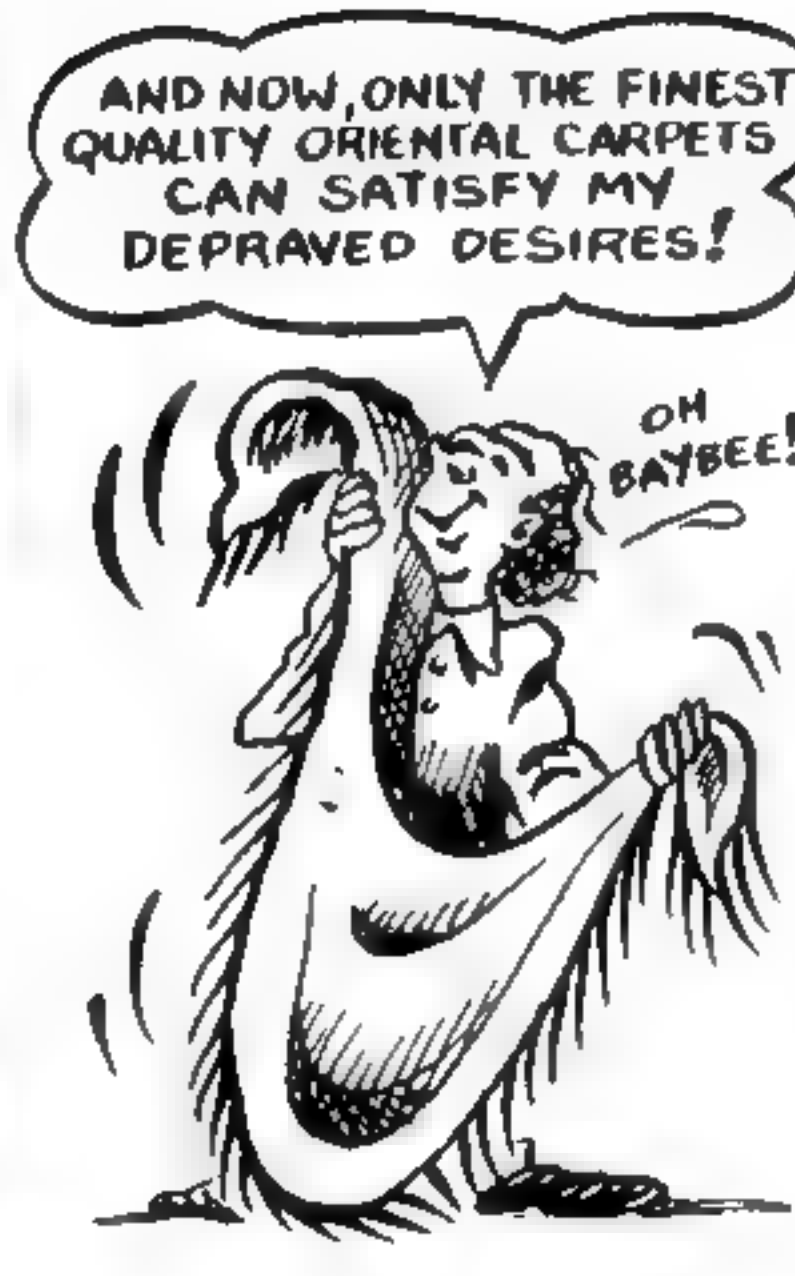




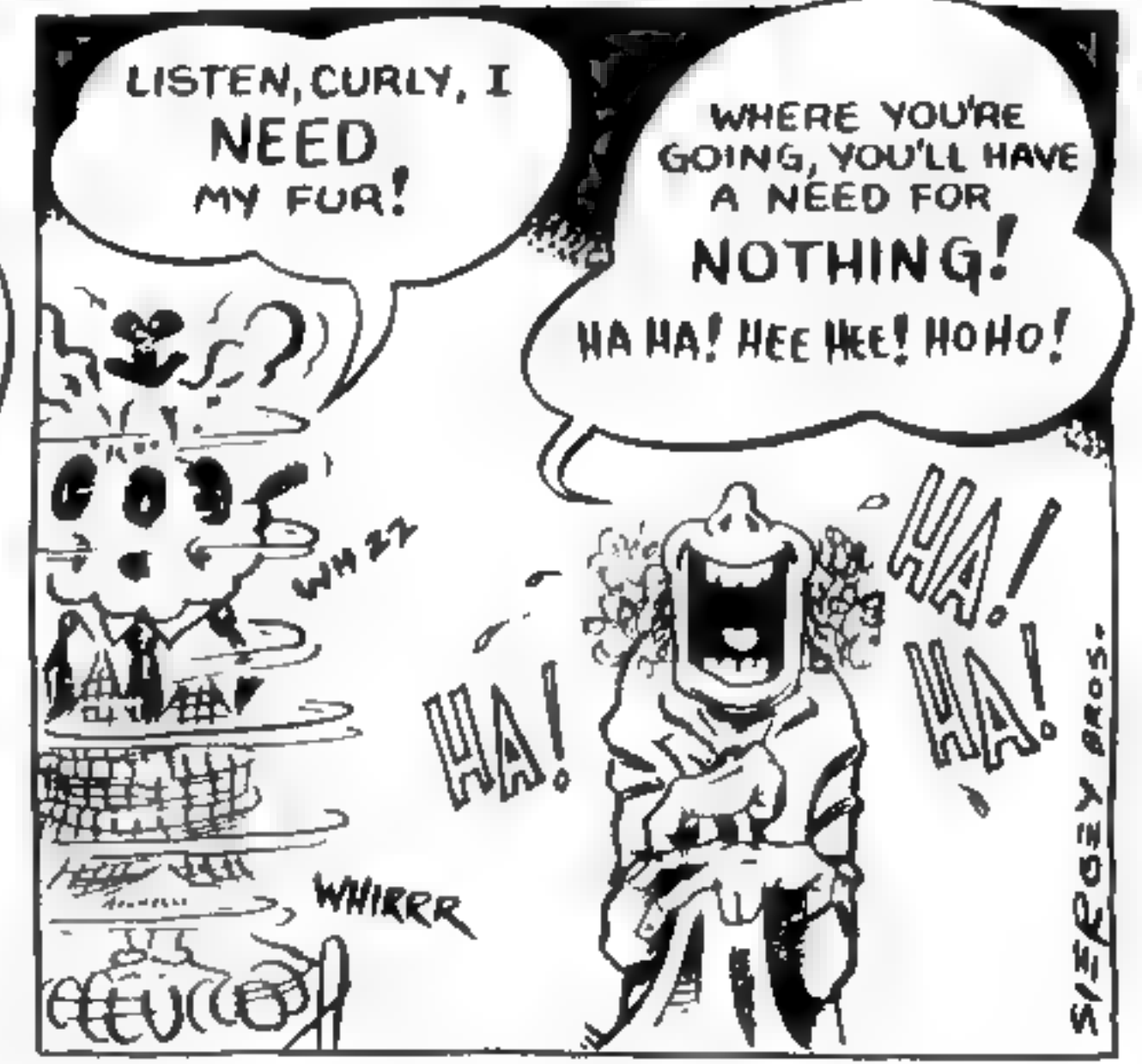
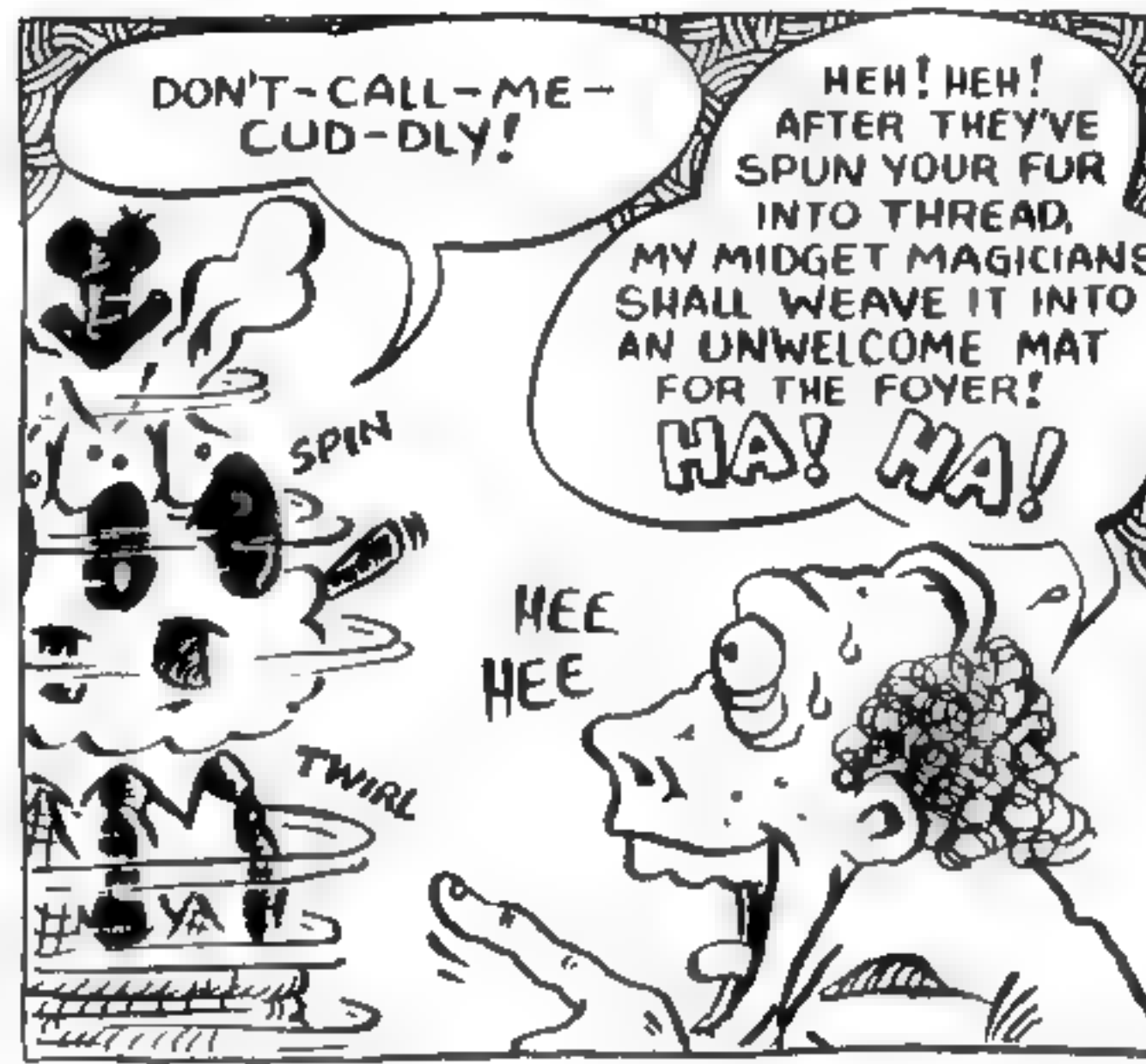
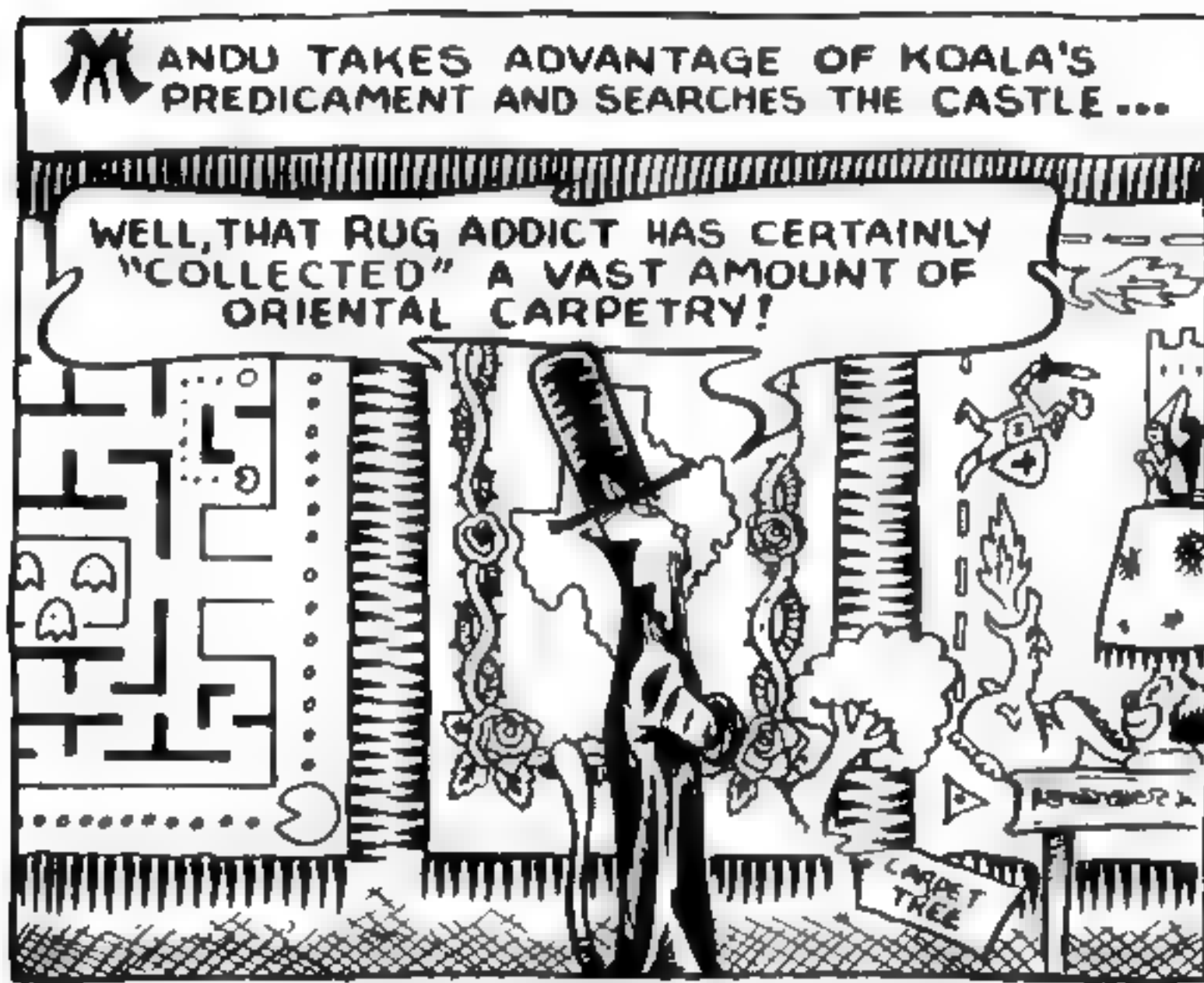




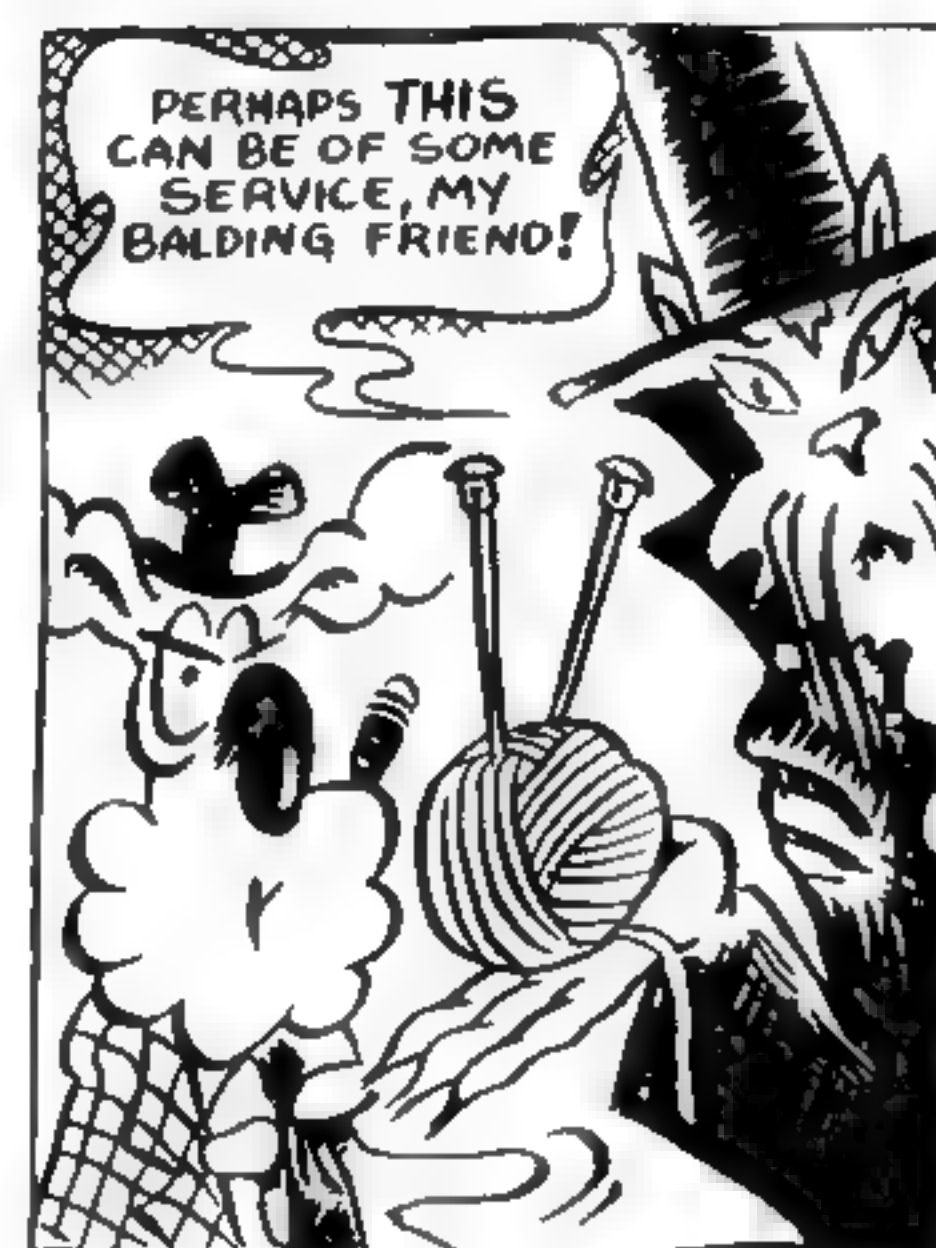
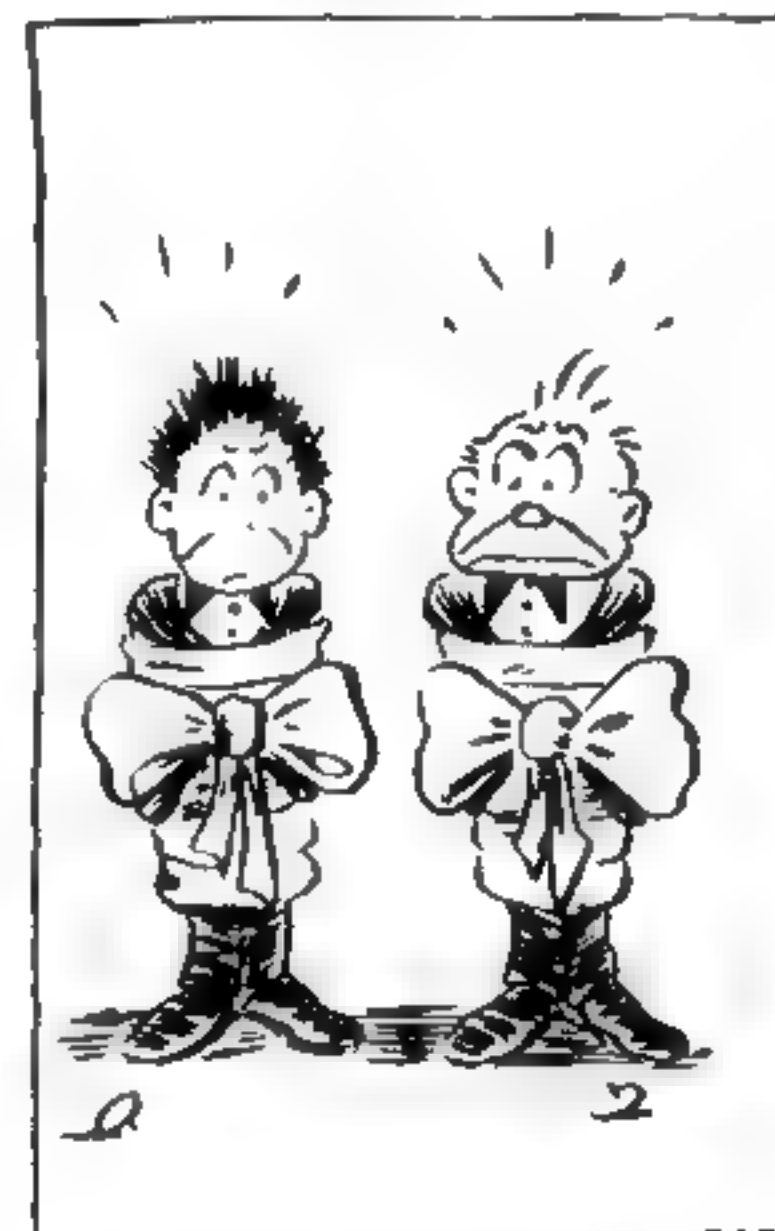
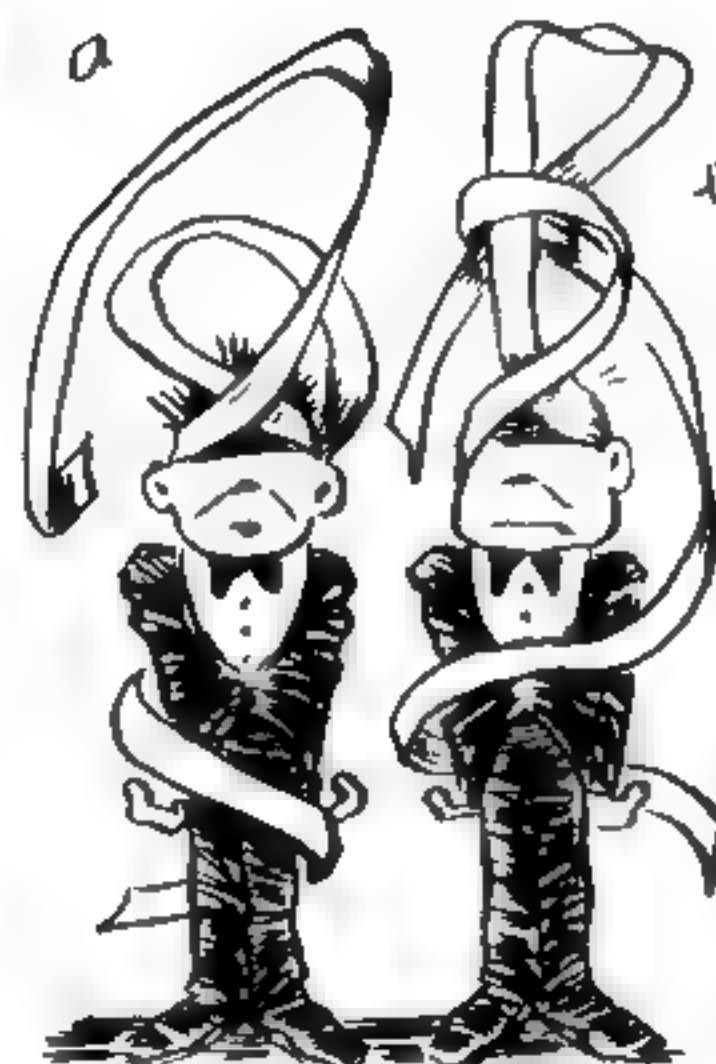




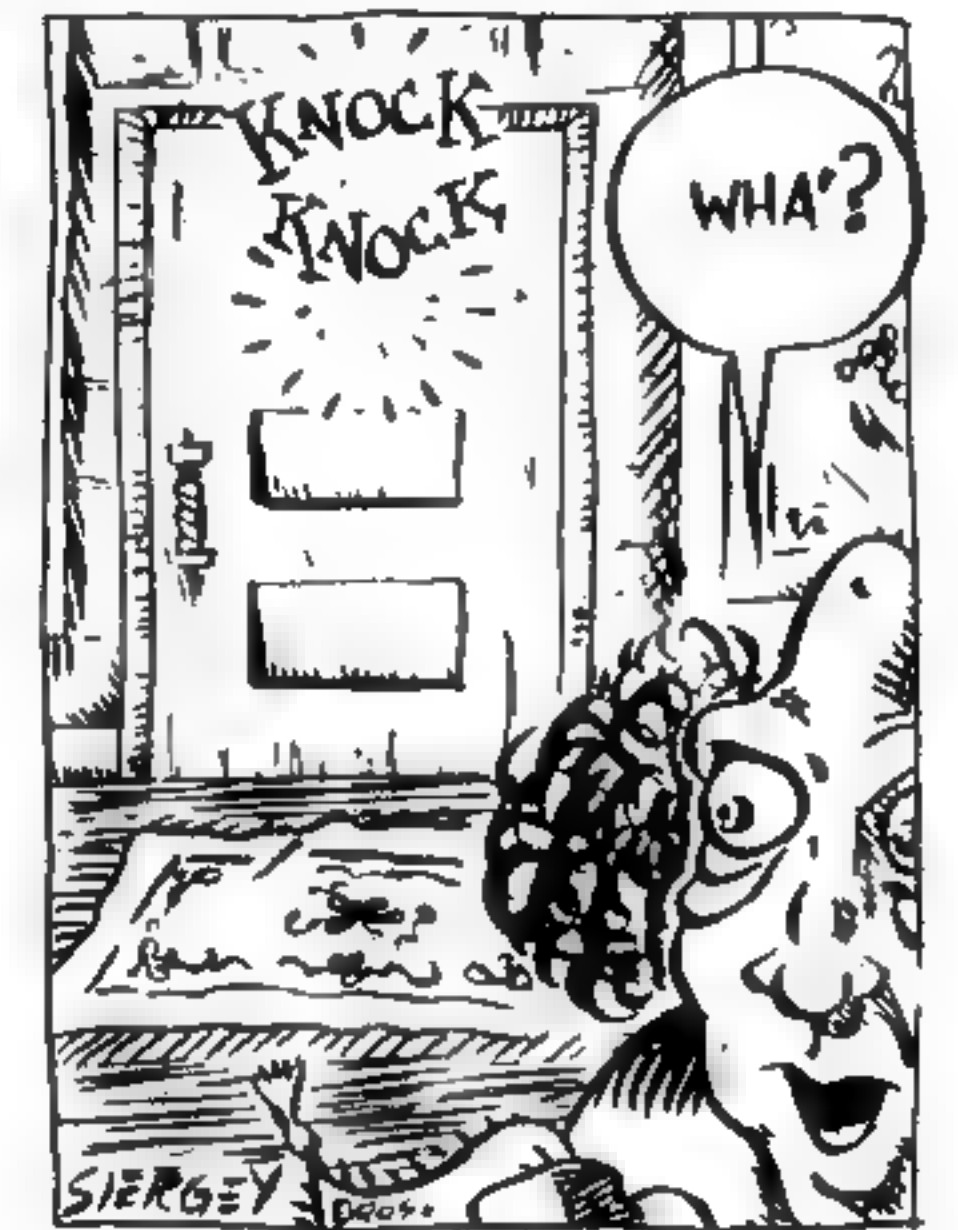
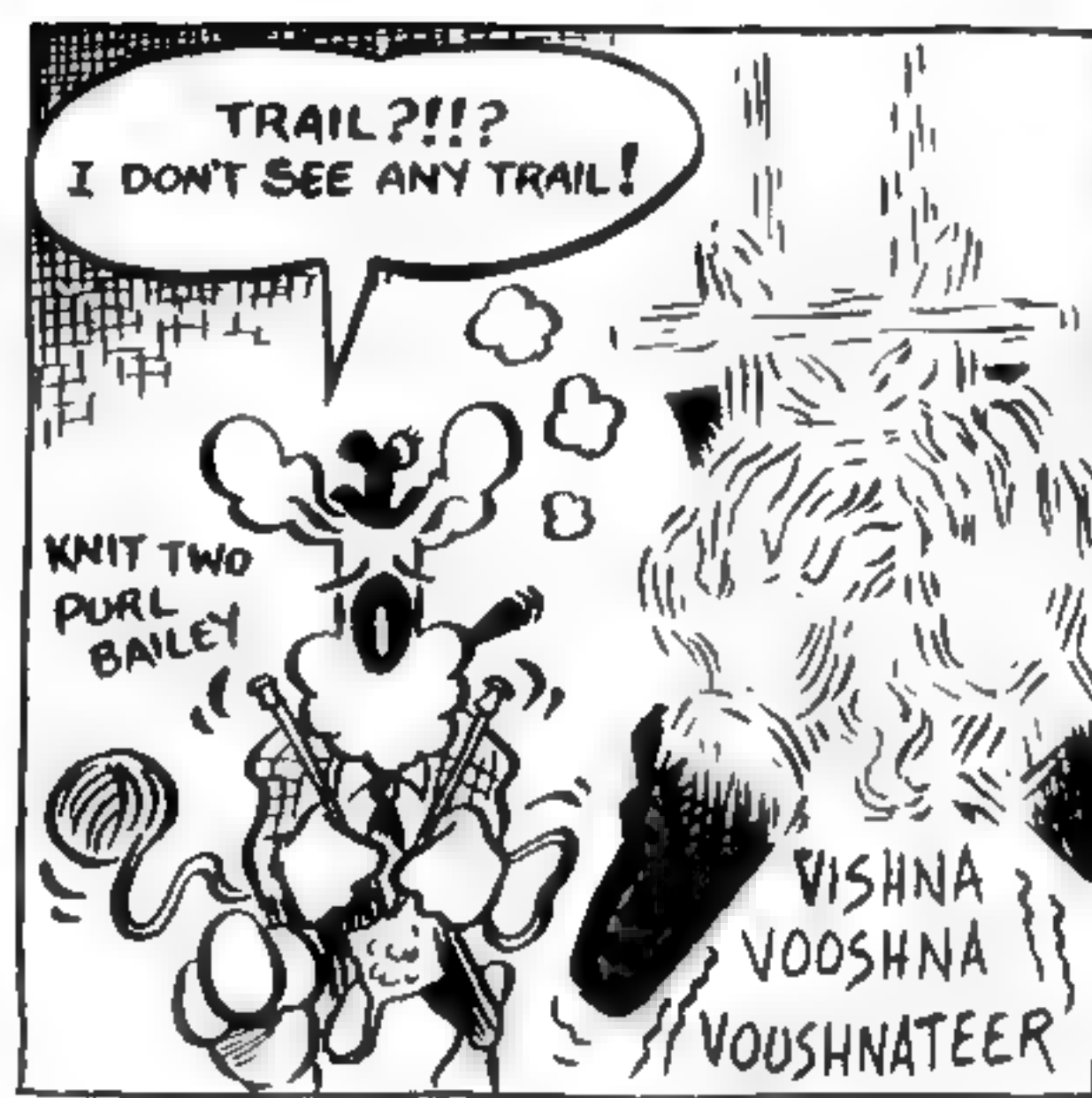












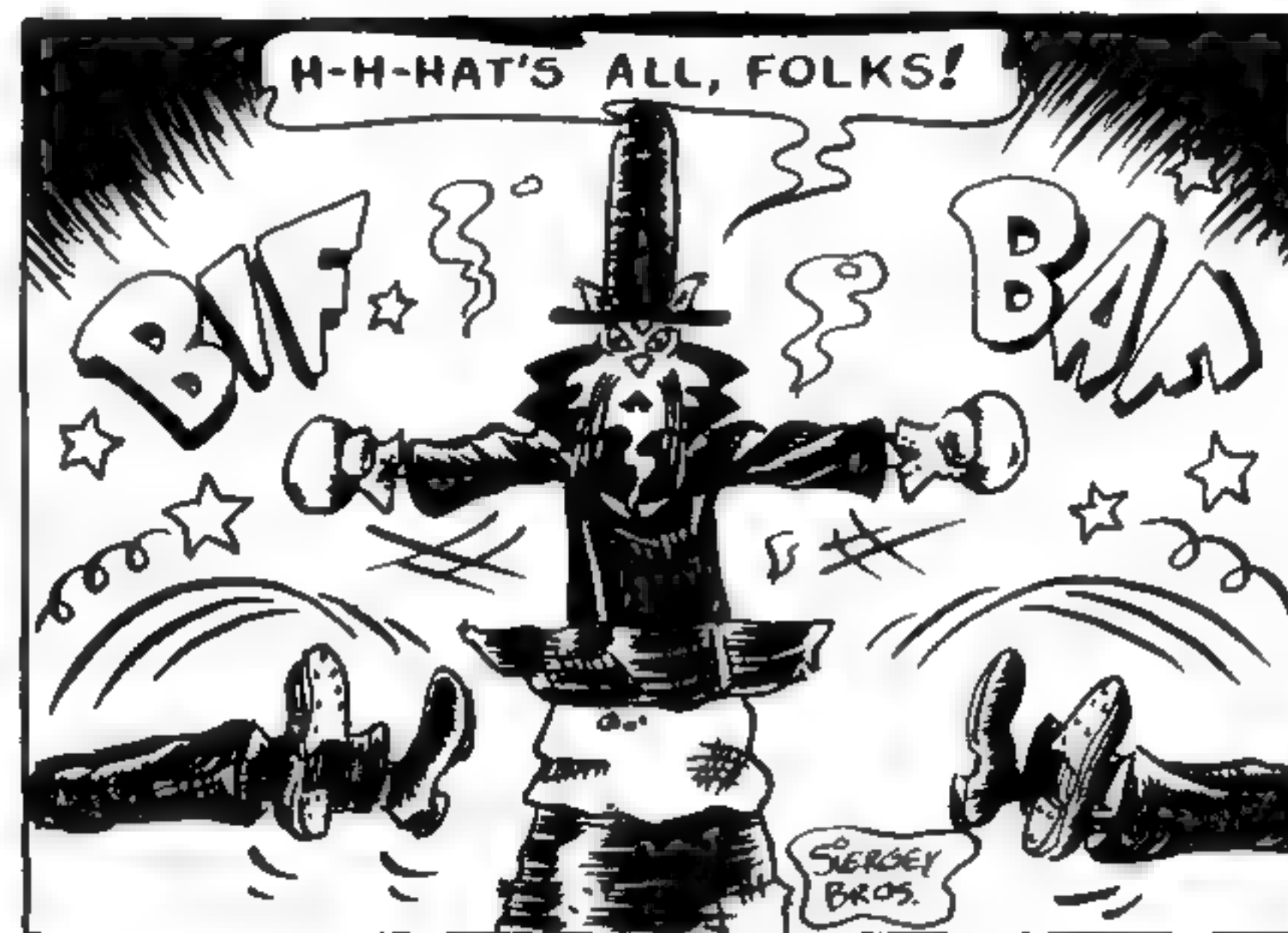








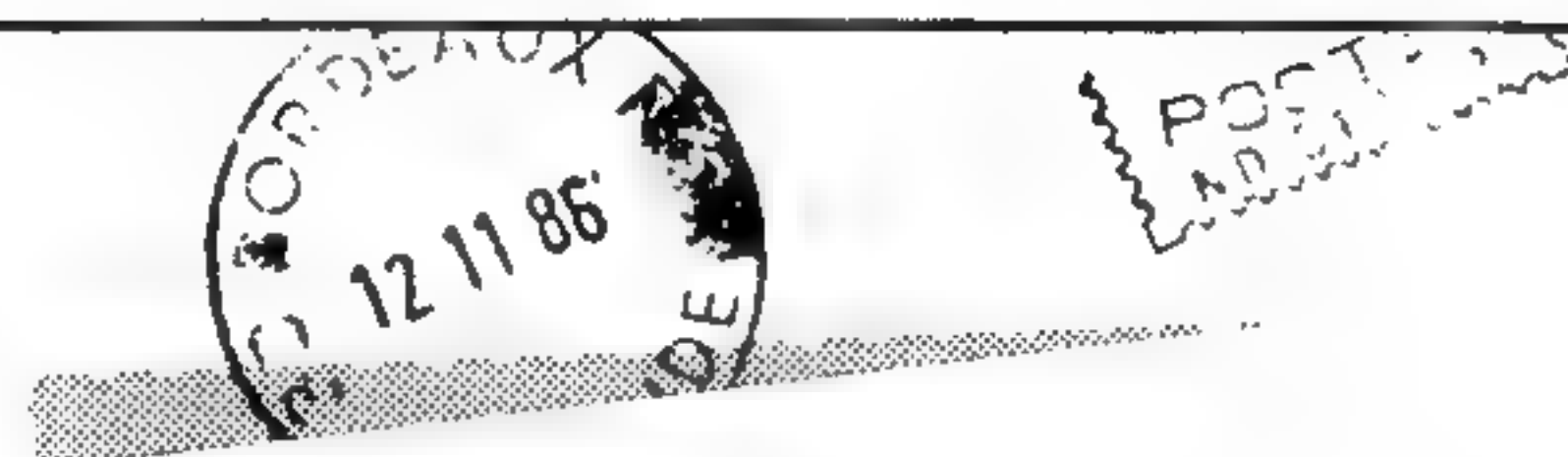




## SO YOU THINK YOU'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES TO SUBMIT ARTWORK TO HONK!

What it takes is an envelope and some stamps—and don't forget a self-addressed return envelope (with postage). Have you got that? Good! You'll also need a biting sense of humor, a healthy cynicism about everything except your own artistic integrity, and a willingness to work for peanuts and further line the pockets of the exploitative capitalist pigs who sit in their big chairs at Fantagraphics Books. Still want to submit artwork to *Honk!*?

Send it to: **HONK!**, 4359 Cornell Rd., Agoura, CA 91301



Dear Most Noble and Wise Editor of *Honk!*

I would cut off my left arm (and my right arm, too) to be in *Honk!* (my favorite magazine in the world). I am a young artist and I think I have some of these are even funny.

I am willing to pay \$200 a page for my artwork (in the whole world). I



I sometimes feel a bit of embarrassment when I'm thinking about what I'm doing for a living," admits David Boswell, creator of *Reid Fleming—World's Toughest Milkman*, "because as one who doesn't read comics, my sympathies are with other people who don't read comics."

You get the impression that Boswell, whose main influences have come from outside the comics medium (see sidebar), would rather talk about cinema, his "first love," or classical music, which he says he might have pursued if he had to do it all over again. In fact, he told me, "I probably know less about comics and cartoonists than anybody you know, including your grandmother."

(While this might not be entirely true, Boswell illustrates his professed ignorance by relating a story about a party several years ago at which he was accused of "basically ripping off" Robert Crumb's hatching style. At the time, Boswell didn't know who Robert Crumb was, and almost got into a fight trying to make one fellow believe him.)

Boswell, who makes his home in Vancouver, B.C., with his wife, Kathi, and three children, simply doesn't have the time or inclination to keep up on the comics world (though he does enjoy Bob Burden's *Flaming Carrot* and the work of Harvey Pekar, Drew

David Boswell enjoying the company of his son Alexander. Boswell, his wife, Kathi, and their three children live in Vancouver, B.C.



Friedman, and M.K. Brown). "I find when the day's over and I've finished my drawing, I'm not really interested in looking at more drawings no matter how good they are. I just want to have a real change."

Not that cartooning is somehow incidental to Boswell, whose hot-tempered, all but out-of-control Reid Fleming character—now delivering milk and mayhem on a regular basis, courtesy of Eclipse—has the biggest chip on his shoulder of any comics character around. In fact, Boswell would be among the first to point out—and demonstrate—that "you can do absolutely anything in a comic."

But it did take time for Boswell to settle on cartooning as his artistic niche. As a young boy he was "never much into cartooning, per se. I always drew and sketched around in the way 10- and 12-year-old boys do when they become aware they can make a commentary on cafeteria food by showing people throwing up—that level of wit." Boswell also recalls one summer he spent when he was 13 copying *Sad Sack* comics. "I really liked that," he says. "Then I forgot about cartooning for years."

And he didn't shed tears when his collection of Superman comics simply disappeared, circa 1965. "I didn't really regret it," he says. "It suddenly became very boring to me."

What had begun to interest Boswell in the uninspiring surroundings of his hometown, London, Ontario (—the "archetypal Canadian

city. It's always 1959 there"—) was movies, particularly the old silents. "It was the way they looked," Boswell says. "I'll never forget that moment when I became aware of tonality as an ingredient in artistic creations." In comparing a movie still from the 1931 *Dracula* starring Bela Lugosi with one from the Christopher Lee remake in 1958, Boswell noted "the more recent one just looked like a photograph of actors with make-up on—too much lighting and too crisp. And I immediately had a preference for the older one. I began to seek out movies and photos of that vintage, and, as I explored further and further, I found they tended to do things a little more thoroughly and a little more artistically back then."

After devouring the early horror movies, Boswell drenched himself in the comedies of the same period. "I became a Marx Brothers and W.C. Fields fan with a capital F," he says. "I'd go through library books and search the index to find Marx, Marx, Marx, Fields, Fields, Fields."

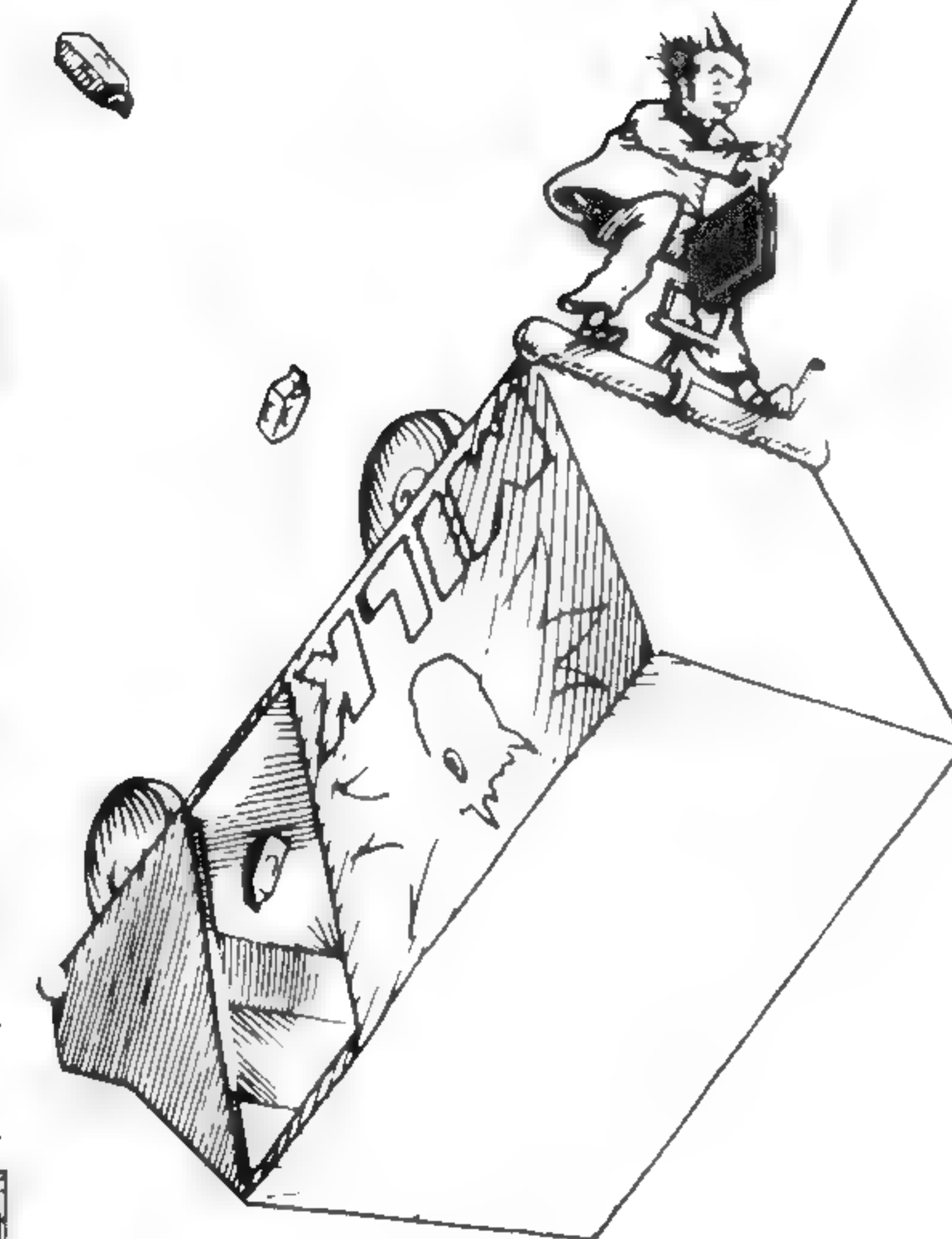
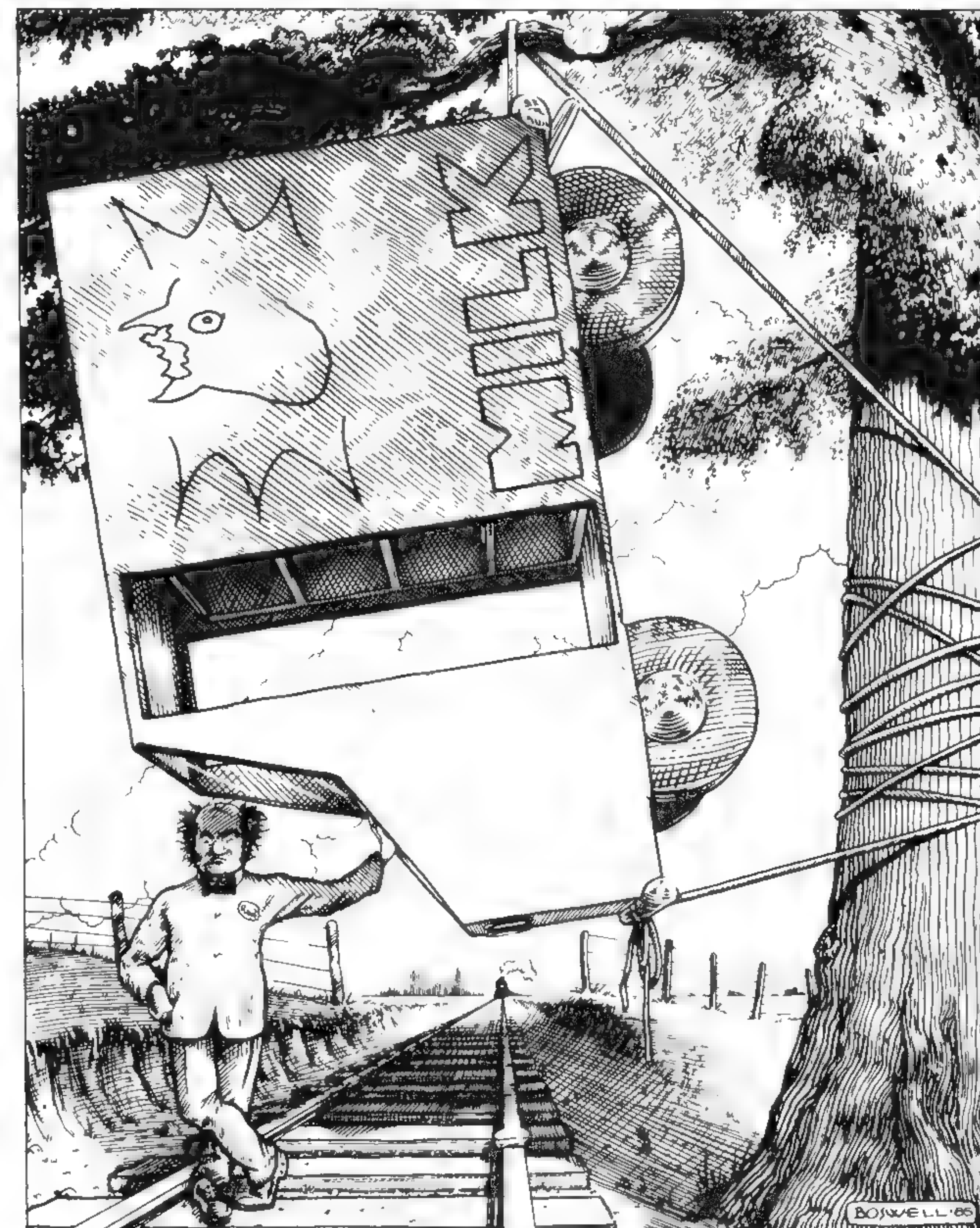
Inevitably, Boswell began experimenting with his own home-made films, even producing a version of *Robin Hood* at age 16. (In his adaptation, the arrow Robin shoots to cut the ropes that bind Friar Tuck ends up in the good Friar's belly instead.)

After high school—and following a brief flirtation with the idea of becoming a detective because it was "outside the norm"—Boswell ended up at an art school, and eventually in a film program. "I guess all I wanted to do there was use the facilities to make a film,"

By  
Joe  
Sacco

# DAVID BOSWELL

## THE MAN BEHIND THE MAN OF MILK



Boswell says, and this he managed in fine style, nabbing sixth place in the student category for a silent, farcical film at the Long Island International Film Festival in 1974.

But a career in films wasn't in the cards for Boswell. After leaving college, he rejected the typical procedure of applying to the Canadian Broadcasting Company for a job as an assistant film editor, "which in reality meant you would drive a truck for a couple of years." Besides, "who wants to work for the CBC and spend 20, 30 years, maybe, working your way to the top? And then what do you do at the CBC anyway? I mean, 95 percent of the stuff they crank out is just crap."

He did try—though unsuccessfully—to have his film aired on a CBC show called *Sprockets*, which featured experimental movies of people "wrapping themselves in 40 yards of cloth and rolling around on the floor while Stockhausen plays in the background." He also went to Toronto to apply at film studios for a directing job. "It was an incredibly stupid thing to do," he admits with a laugh, "but I figured I'd start at the top. I couldn't get past the front door and the secretary nine times out of ten. So I said, 'Ah, to hell with it!'"

"If I'd been ambitious, I would have been discouraged," he adds. "I was never ambitious. I just wanted to support myself without doing anything too demeaning."

Reid Fleming shows his milk truck who's boss in a commissioned illustration which was later used as a poster.

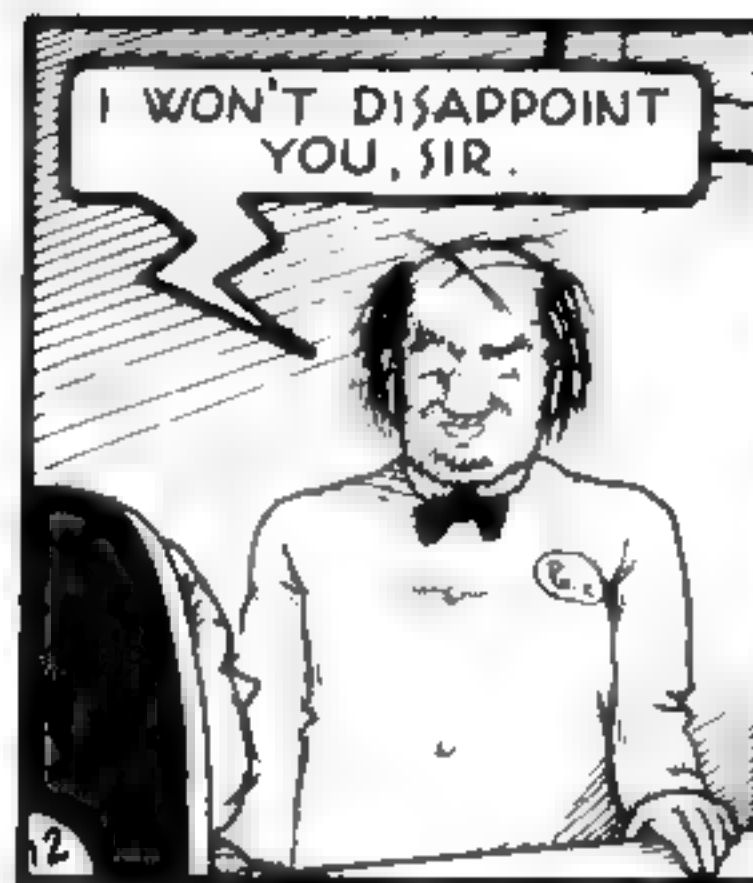




And so Boswell continued the string of odd jobs that had helped him through school and would provide some of the inspiration for *Reid Fleming*.

The first of these was a job installing cable television. "You'd go into a person's home or their hospital room, and you'd talk to them and see how they lived for five, ten, or 15 minutes. Sometimes they'd give you drinks. Sometimes they'd be real jerks. Sometimes the women would let their tops fall open. You got a real nice cross section of society. So I think that's a lot of Reid Fleming. (In fact, Reid's going to lose his milkman job in [an upcoming] book—just for a while. He's going to come back as a cable installer.)"

One of Boswell's early gag cartoon efforts, drawn in 1977. It was rejected by *Playboy*, *National Lampoon*, the *Village Voice*, and the *Saturday Review*.



Above left: Reid Fleming in characteristic pose, with characteristic attitude. Above: "I'm not bald—I get my hair cut this way" is a line that used to be uttered by Darryl, a friend from Boswell's days in Toronto.

Delivering pizzas gave Boswell more opportunities to meet customers in their homes. "One time I went to a delivery at about two in the morning. The house was pitch dark, and I thought nobody was home. A woman answered with a negligee on. She was blond and really attractive. She asked, 'What time are you finished?' I said, 'About

an hour or so.' I didn't know what to do. Then I looked down, and I just about died. She had *really* thick ankles. I cannot abide thick ankles. So I went home instead of to her place."

Boswell found further inspiration at the \$29-a-week dive he rented in downtown Toronto, which would be condemned a month after he left. "It was a really good place to get material," he says. "I met a lot of interesting people. They all went crazy or committed suicide. . . . It was really scummy. Nobody (there) you'd call normal."

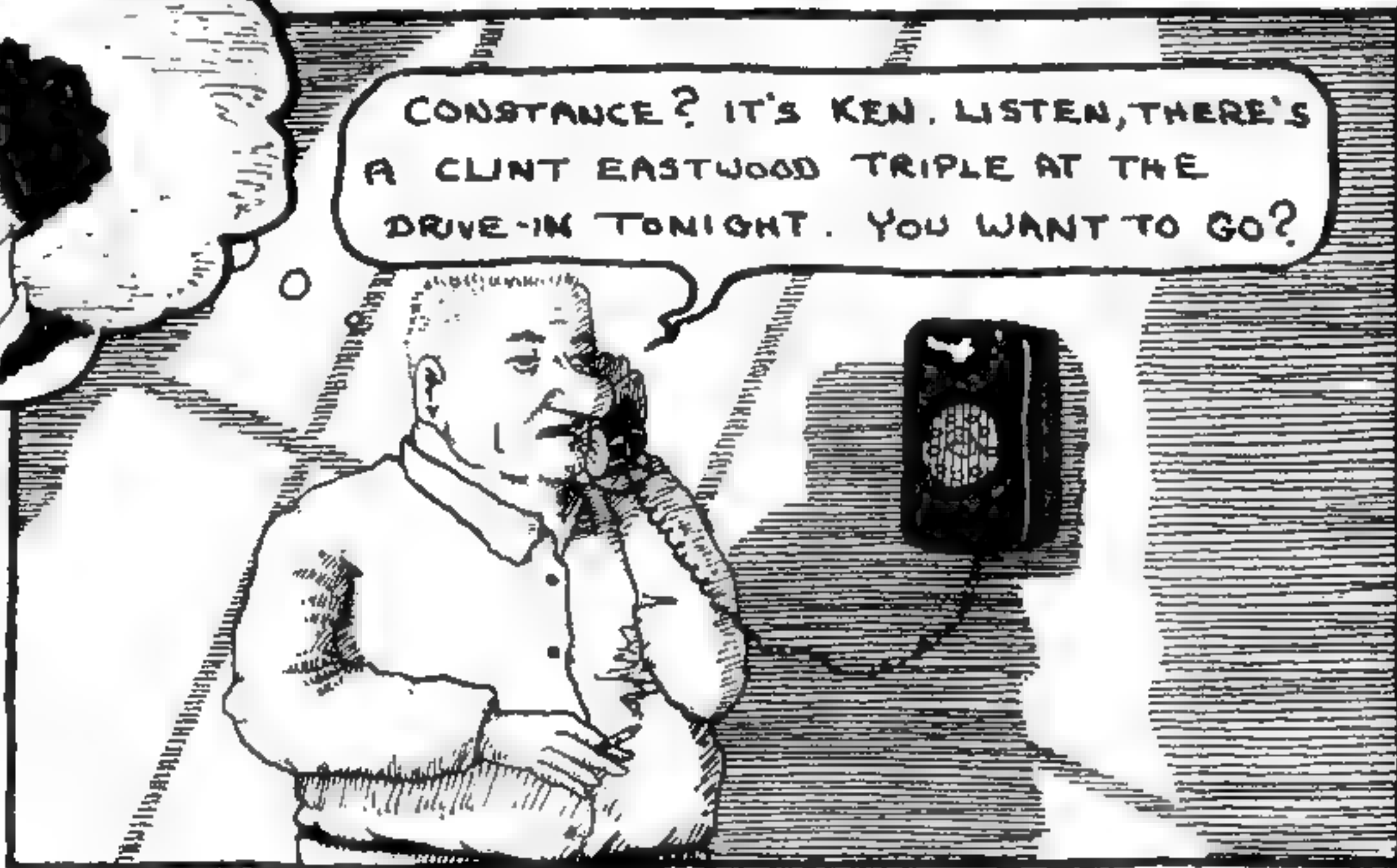
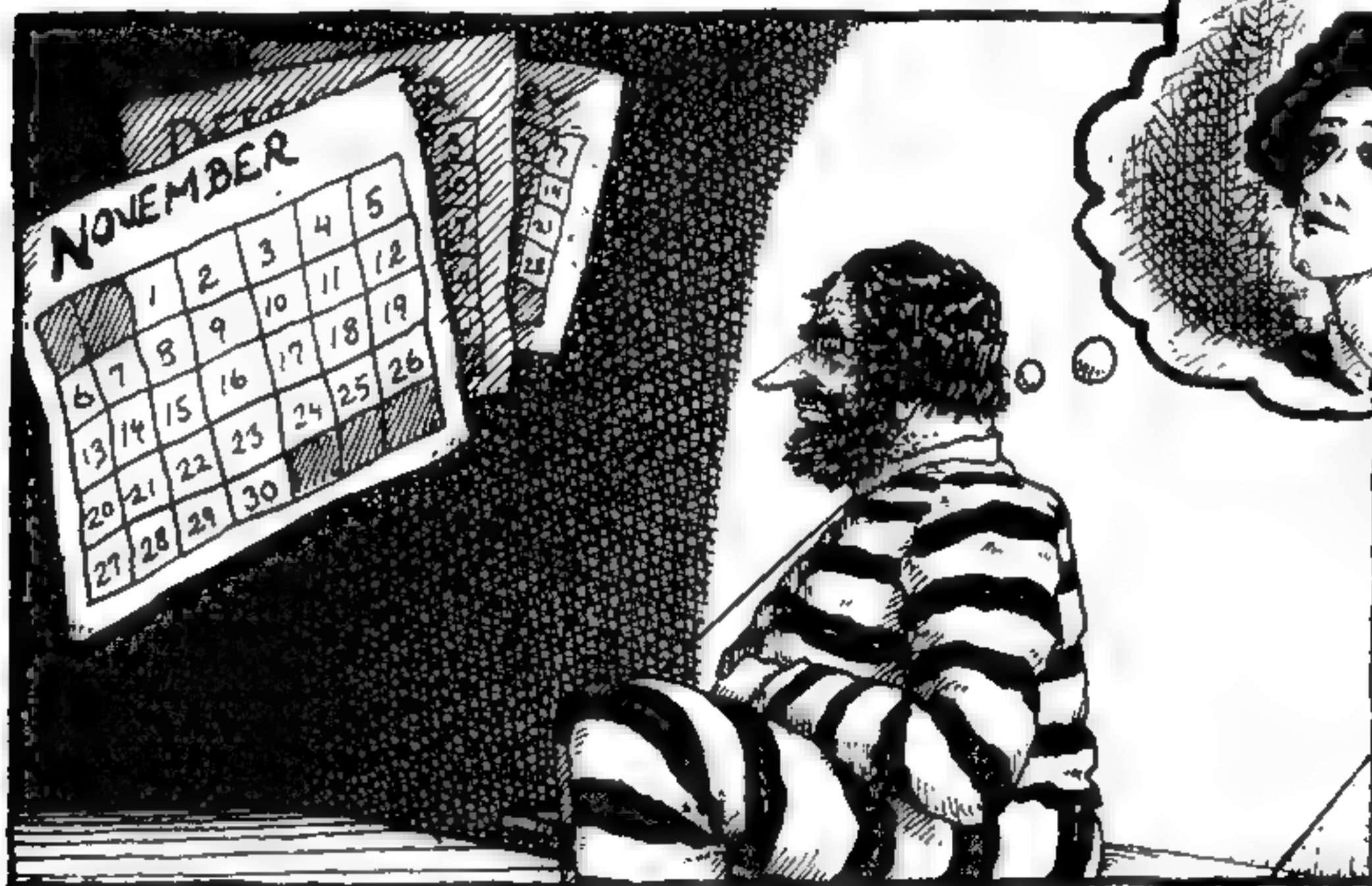
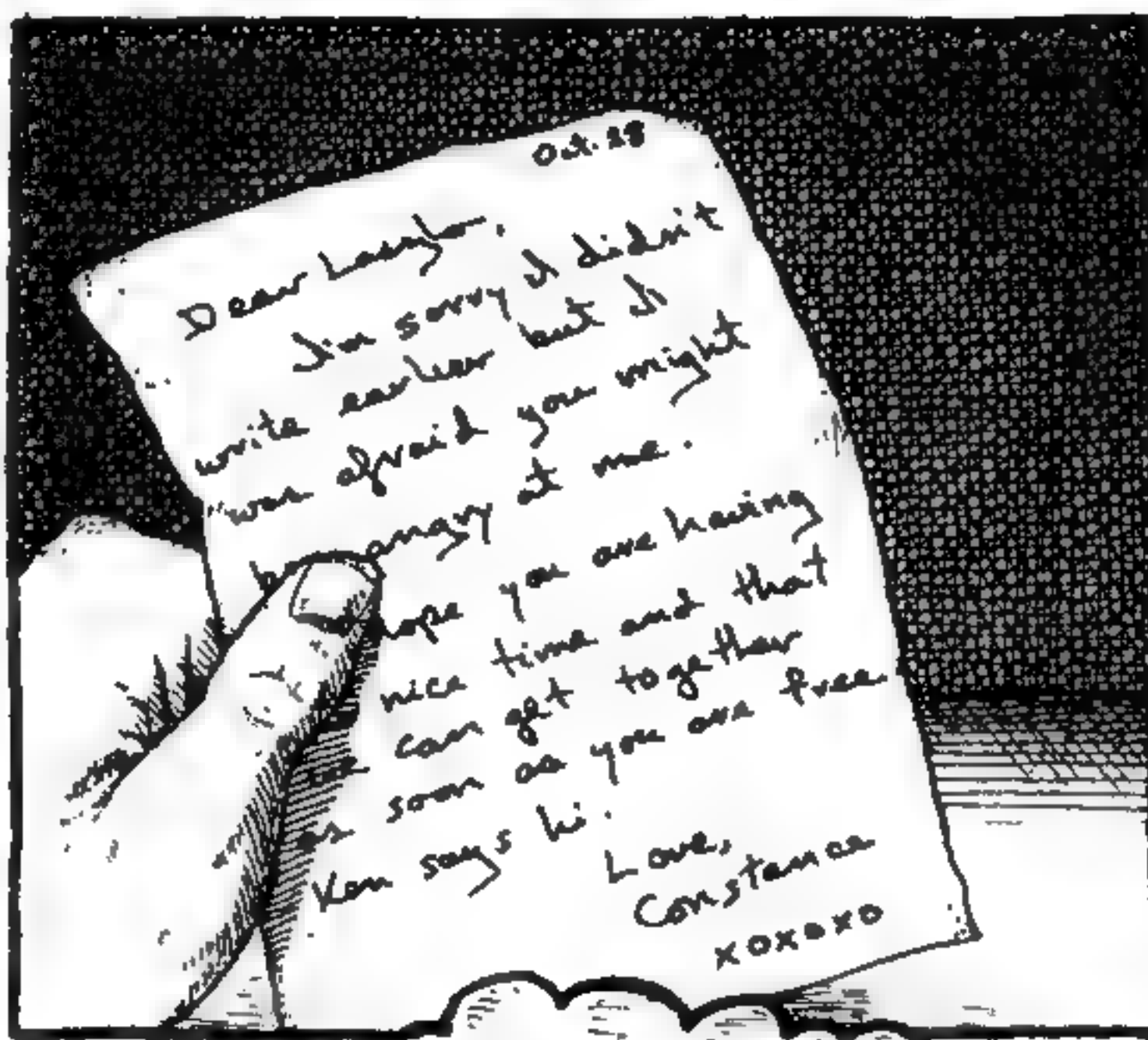
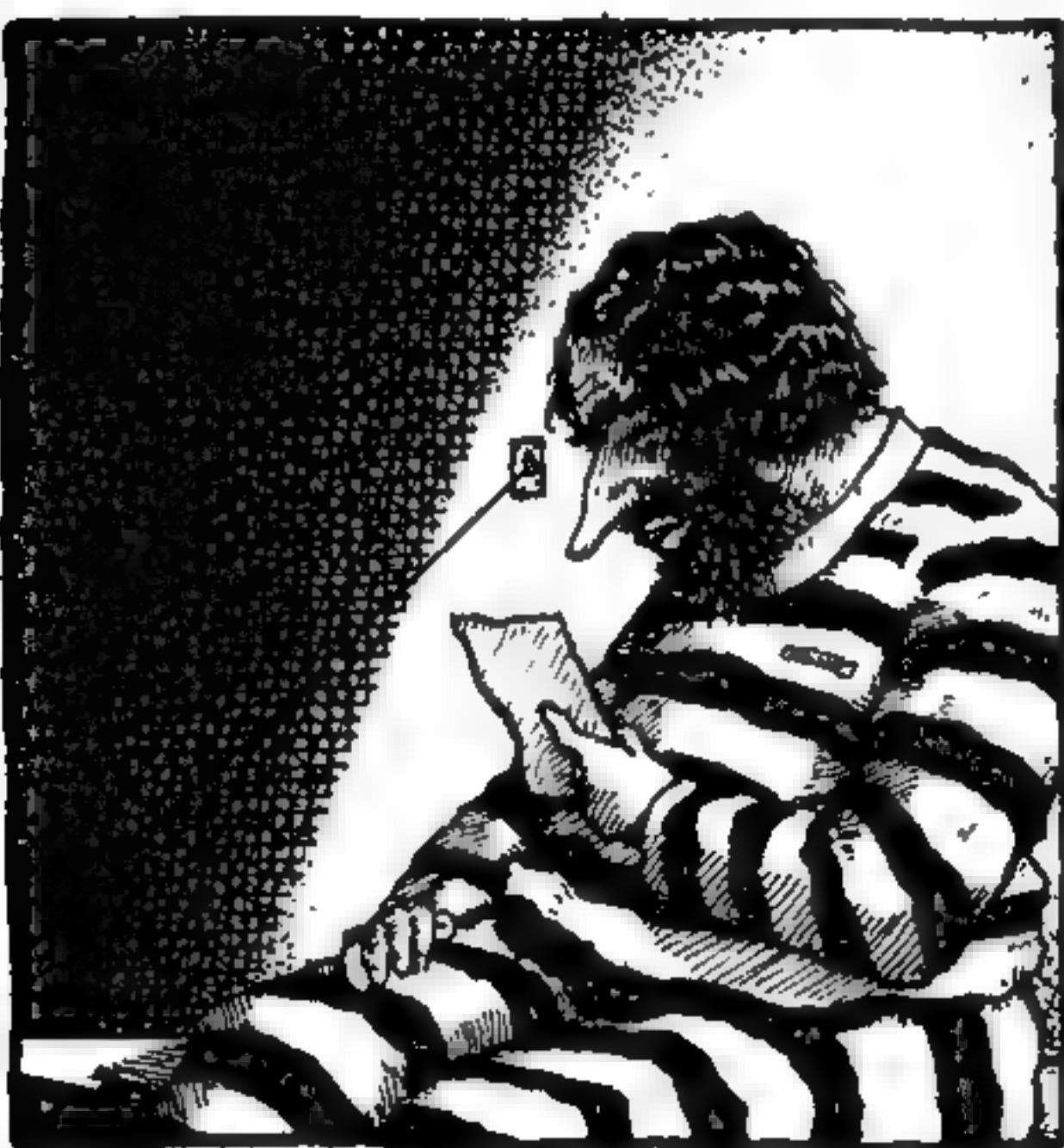
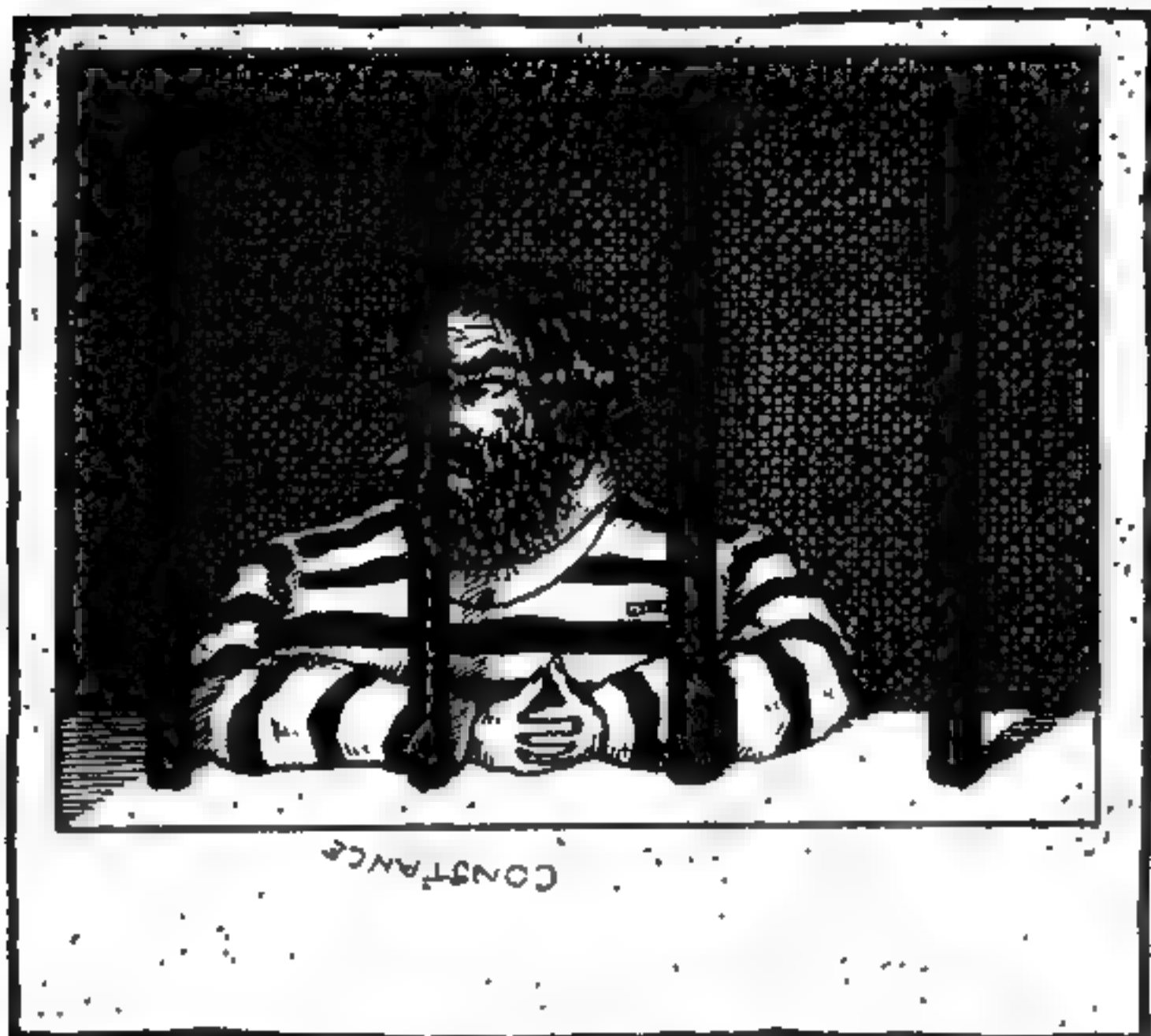
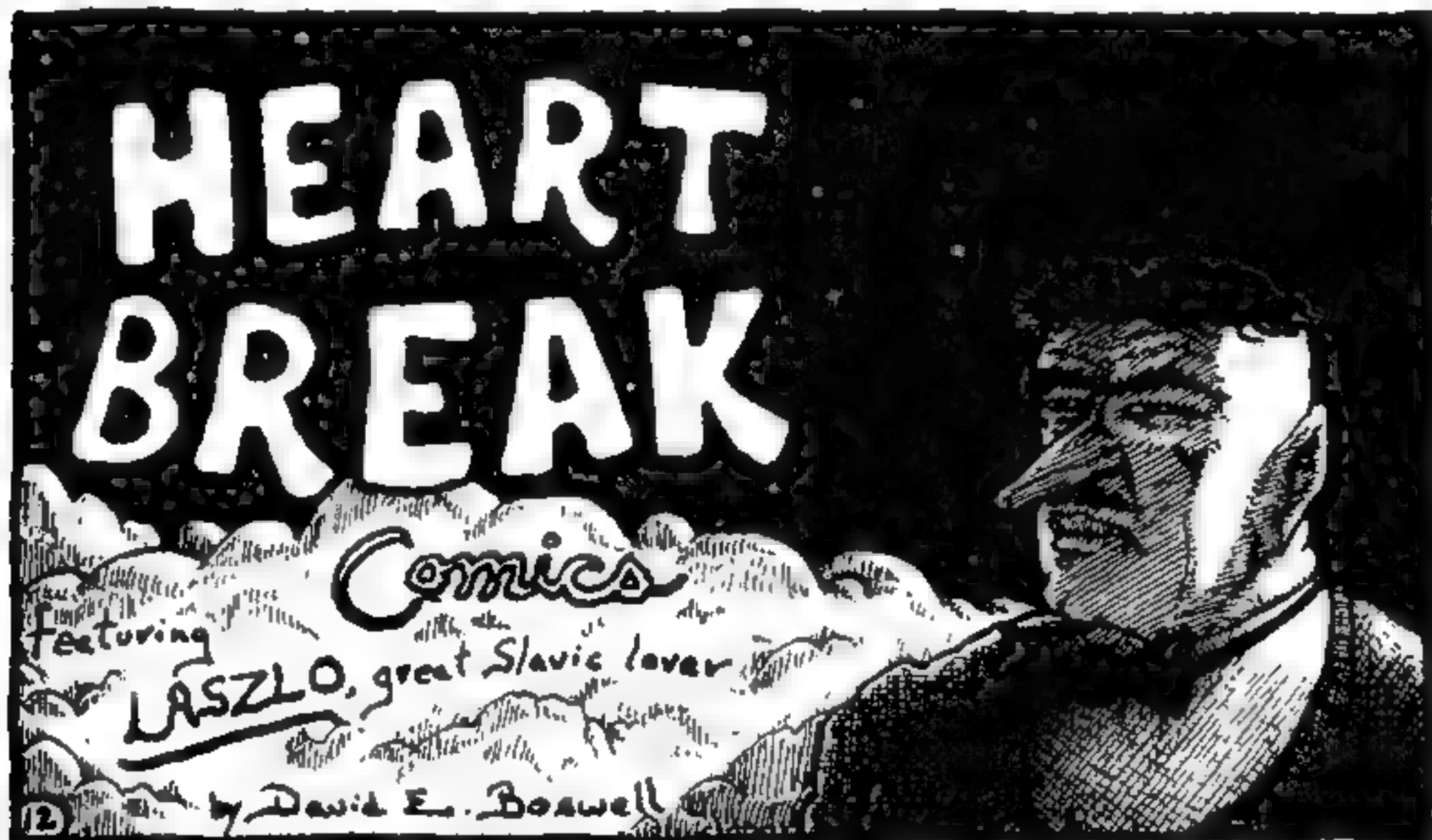
"The guy who lived in the basement furnished a lot of the stuff for *Reid Fleming*. . . His name was Darryl, and he was doing time on the weekends for armed robbery. When I first met Darryl I thought he was going to kill me. People in the house tended to meet in the basement apartment, which was Darryl's, but we never saw Darryl. He was always in jail or some place else. I felt after a while it was just like a common room you'd drop into." But one day, when Boswell dropped in looking for a fellow tenant, he found Darryl. "He turned around and said, 'I don't know who the fuck you are, but you get out of this room this second or I'm going to blow your head off.'"

A phony ad by Boswell, circa 1983.



"Okay, if it'll make it any easier for you, I'll drink the glass of water while you talk."







It was an inauspicious first meeting, but Darryl, amused by the patchy comic strips and panel cartoons Boswell was beginning to experiment with, became Boswell's hard and fast friend. They spent time together firing blanks at people on the street for laughs and, in one case, keeping a would-be rock star rehearsing all night while they pretended to be big-time record executives with a spare contract.

With a host of tragic family and relationship problems, Darryl finally cracked in the spring of 1977, trashed his room, and took off with a stolen U-Haul trailer to eastern Canada. "It's been ten years now since I heard anything [about him]," Boswell laments. "He could have gone straight, but he had so many strikes against him that summer. I used to stay up all night and try to talk him into another way of thinking."

**M**eanwhile, Boswell had begun sending his cartoons around with the encouragement of a friend. "I was always informed by people in the business that no magazine ever bought cartoons the first time out from an unknown person," he says. So Boswell "played the game," hitting slick, top-of-the-line publications with more submissions after each rejection. And he began enclosing a full page of something he called Heart Break Comics to go with his single-panel submissions. The *Georgia Straight*, an underground paper based in Vancouver, B.C., bought the page and asked for more. "So I thought, forget single-panel drawings. I'll just do Heart Break," he says. "I began to do that on a weekly basis, for \$20 a week."

The character Boswell featured in Heart Break was Laszlo, a "Slavic lover" in the tradition of the Eric Rhode character in Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers' movies, who was always "spouting some malapropism. [He was] the stereotype of the foreign lover." Boswell admits that Heart Break Comics is "in a lot of ways the fruit of my experience with a certain woman that went on for years and years and years. And the keynote of that relationship was frustration. The same with Laszlo. Things always fall just a bit short of making sense to him."

After drawing the weekly strip for two or three months, Boswell became disheartened because he wasn't making much of a living for his efforts. "And, moreover, I was only getting paid once a month, and even then the check would come late. I was getting deeper in debt." So Boswell wrote to his liaison at the *Georgia Straight*, the advertising manager Vents Baumanis, to say he couldn't continue and had set up an interview for a darkroom job. (Photography was another of Boswell's interests.) Vents, who, like Laszlo, was of Slavic descent, called Boswell to say a check was in the mail. "'Don't get that job—it will destroy your mind,' Vents told me. I believed him," says Boswell. "I didn't go to the interview. I kept on drawing the comics and the check still didn't come. I was so far involved with it that I couldn't really get out."

"So finally Vents said, 'You can come and work in Vancouver at the paper.'" The staff position seemed like a godsend to Boswell. His parents bought him a plane ticket to Vancouver, and the day of his flight he called the *Georgia Straight* to let Vents know when he would be arriving. He found out Vents no



longer worked for the paper, and, ironically, that Vents was leaving for Toronto—from which Boswell was departing—that same day. And, to his dismay, Boswell realized that Vents had offered him a job under no one's authority but his own.

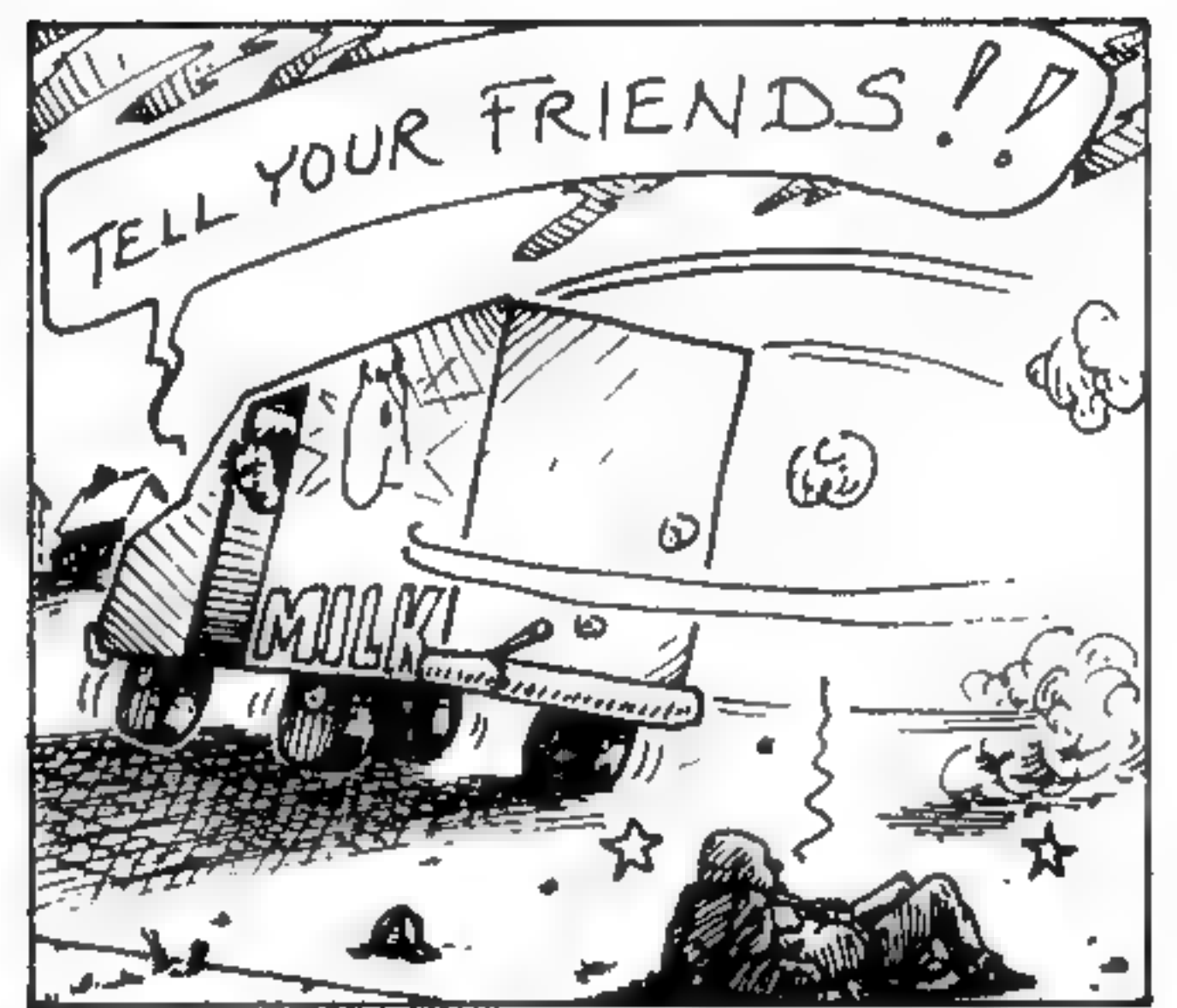
Despite this news, Boswell flew to Vancouver. "I got out there to find the paper to be in bad shape, financially. Luckily, the new editor was quite agreeable to keeping the comic running." He assigned a short-lived humor column to Boswell, and Boswell did freelance darkroom work and photography to further supplement his income.

**R**eid Fleming was unleashed upon the world in the pages of the *Georgia Straight* for the first time in June 1978. Boswell had only intended for Reid to be a one-shot character, as a break from the con-

Above: In his tenure as a photographer with the *Georgia Straight*, Boswell (left) had the opportunity to meet a celebrity here and there. Ginger Rogers is also flanked by *Straight* editor Bob Mercer. Below: From the first Reid Fleming comic.







tinuing Heart Break strips. "I had Reid in my sketchbook when I came out to Vancouver, but nobody had seen it, and it was only meant to be a one-off anyway."

That first page (redrawn for *Reid Fleming* #1) has the Man of Milk beating up someone for making fun of his milk truck, pounding down a bottle of rye as he zooms off, pouring milk into a customer's goldfish tank, and then threatening, "Seventy-eight cents or I

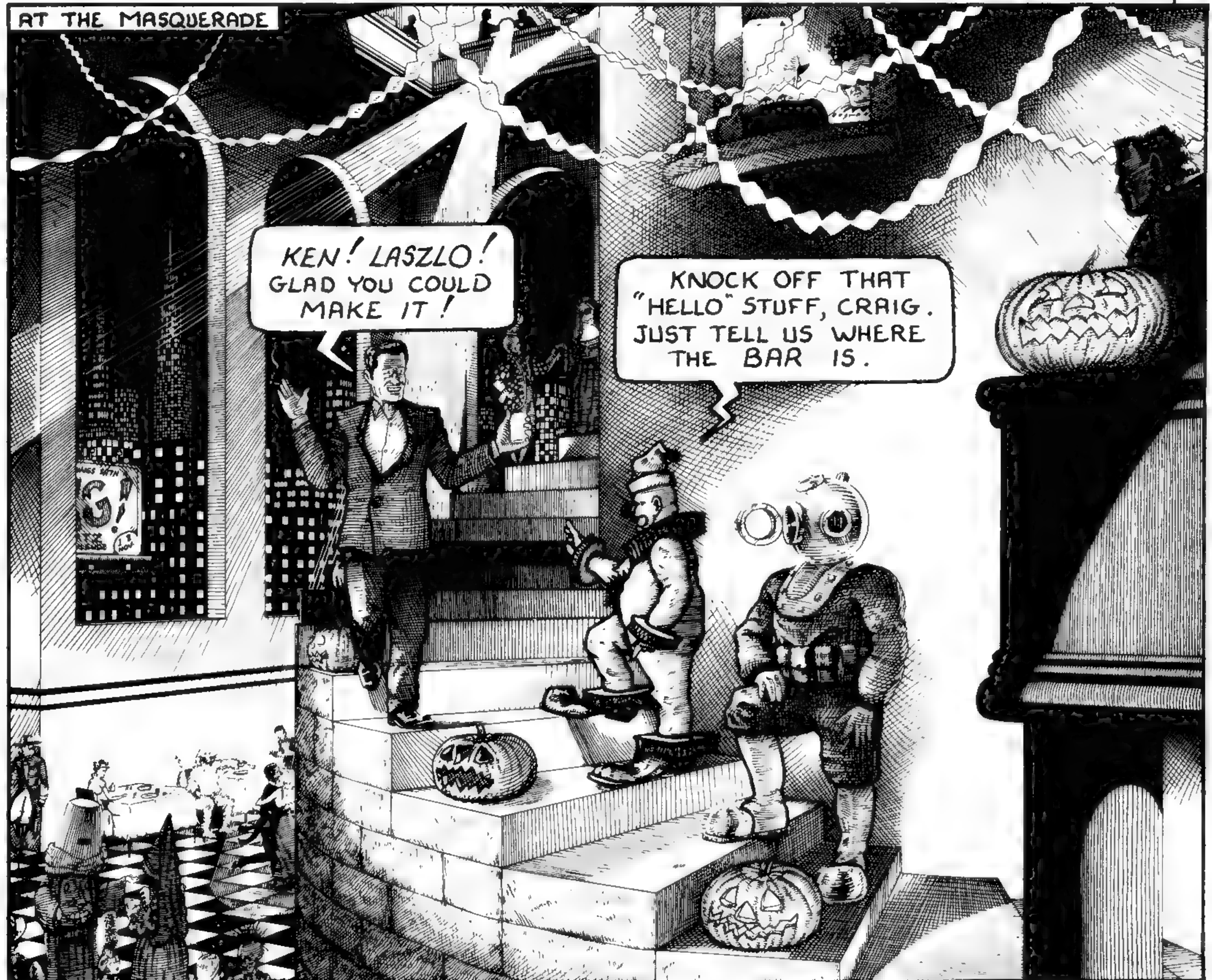
piss on your flowers!" Says Boswell of that page: "It's the cornerstone of the entire Reid Fleming personality. It's been tough to continue in some respects because everything is summed up in that one page."

Boswell went back to doing Heart Break for the rest of the summer, but he received

numerous letters demanding Reid's return. "Heart Break was the kind of comic you would savor while smiling to yourself. But people tended to laugh out loud at Reid Fleming. It was a whole different response."

"I think one reason many people like Reid is that most of us at one time have had a ser-

Above: The manic Reid Fleming from the second *Reid* comic. Below: An example of Boswell's superb draftsmanship and shading from *Heart Break Comics*.







vice job, whether waiting on tables or delivering pizza, and one can relate to that. . . . That kind of a job gets tiresome after a while, and inevitably one wonders how it would be to shove that pizza in the guy's face. So Reid's just like you or me, only braver. Or stupider. Or both."

Boswell is the first to admit that Reid Fleming doesn't have the sort of depth Laszlo has. "Reid is more of a surface character," he says. "I think his entire personality should be evident in his actions. I don't want to explain him too much. I just want him to be. . . I think it weakens the character if you have to say, 'Well, he's like this because his mother beat up on him when he was a small boy, and his father was cold.' That kind of stuff I find superfluous and a bit tedious as well."

Boswell has managed to add flavor to Reid Fleming, which replaced Heart Break Comics in the pages of the *Georgia Straight* from the late summer of '78 to February of '79, with a host of foils for Reid. These include Mr. Crabbe, Reid's supervisor and constant nemesis; Mr. O'Clock, president of Milk, Inc., who's getting "more and more senile all the time, helped along by Mr. Crabbe, who is putting something in his private supply of milk"; Cooper, a.k.a. Captain Coffee, Reid's co-worker, who "fits in as well as a narcoleptic personality can fit into any situation"; and Lena, Reid's wife, who punches just as well as he does. And just when Reid's angry antics threaten to get out of hand, he takes a break by watching the dead-serene adventures of Ivan, his comatose television hero. "It's a quiet place in Reid's day," Boswell explains. And quiet it is indeed, for Reid stops whatever he is doing to see if Ivan will come out of his six-year coma. "If Reid didn't have cause to hope. . . he wouldn't bother," says Boswell. "But he's so dedicated and so full

of faith. And it's true! One day Ivan does regain consciousness, albeit for only 30 seconds or so. Then he dies."

After enjoying Reid Fleming's popularity, Boswell decided to tie up the loose ends with Laszlo by producing a Heart Break comic book. He secured a leave of absence from the *Georgia Straight* and moved to his parents' home in Dundas for four months of artistic solitude. "I realized quickly that I'd bitten off much more than I could chew. . . I got maybe a quarter of the book done in that time, and I came back to the paper to find out, 'Hey! Surprise! There's no job for you any more!'"

While Boswell was away, the *Georgia Straight* had metamorphosed into a family-oriented paper running syndicated Mickey Mouse strips, and there was no longer room for the manic humor of Reid Fleming. "There I was, high and dry in the summer of '79, with no job. I thought the only way to bounce back was to do a Reid Fleming comic book." Boswell moved into cheap student housing with his future wife and spent the next 10 months reworking and expanding upon his *Georgia Straight* Reid strips.

In 1980, he self-published 10,000 copies of *Reid Fleming—World's Toughest Milkman*, using \$3,000 in inheritance money. "And then I began to look for distribution. I didn't know a thing. I didn't know the names of any distributors. And I managed, by talking to people who had some contacts, to find out to whom I should send books. It was a very slow and painful process. . . Last Gasp picked up a couple of thousand copies right away. Within six months I'd broken even on the book and the rest was all gravy. It did sell out eventually."

Boswell next decided to complete his Heart Break Comics project. He wanted a more sophisticated look than his Reid Fleming work, and he honed his skills with numerous test drawings. The artwork, on which Boswell pulled out all the stops and spent three and a half years, is superbly atmospheric, with painstaking shading. "If you look at my tech-

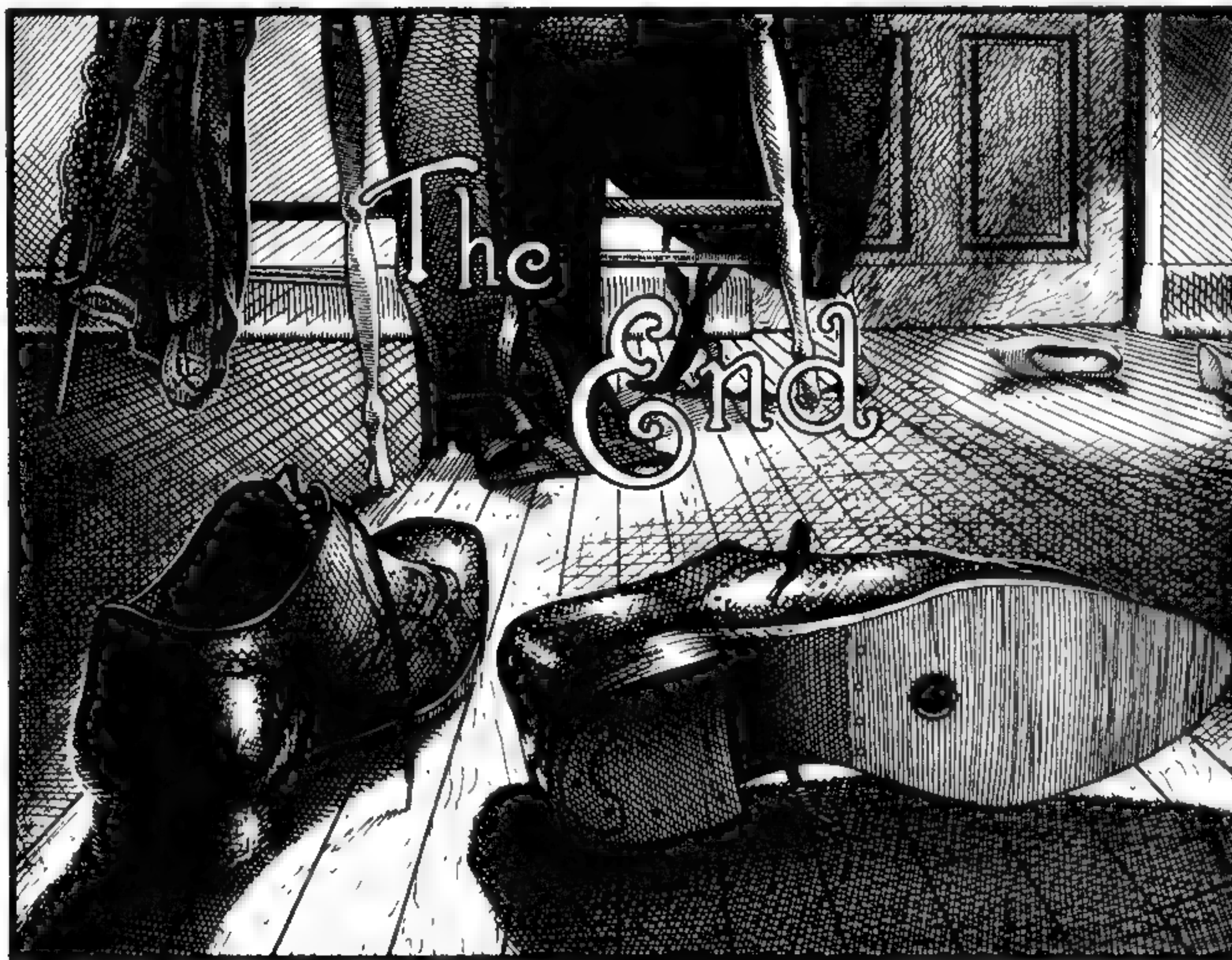


nique, you can see that it's in many ways a modification of the wood-cutting technique used by engravers of the 19th century, with the fine parallel lines," Boswell explains. "It's not as quick as using Zipatone or something like that. That stuff looks so mechanical and dead that. . . I don't see the tone. I just see the time saved. You get a kind of control and a subtlety of variation in tone with a few strokes of the pen that you can't get with Zipatone."

Heart Break Comics' story-line, about a love triangle involving Laszlo, his partner Ken, and their secretary Constance (with Reid Fleming thrown into the plot for good measure), has a texture as developed as its accompanying artwork. "I think if you just want to read the book very quickly, it's got a fast-moving story that has a good line through it. But you can go back, I think, and find other ways of looking at the same material," he said. "And I really appreciate that quality in other work, if I can find it."

Heart Break Comics, which Boswell self-

Scenes from *Heart Break Comics*: Reid's strength, Ken's flatulence, and the hole in Laszlo's sole.



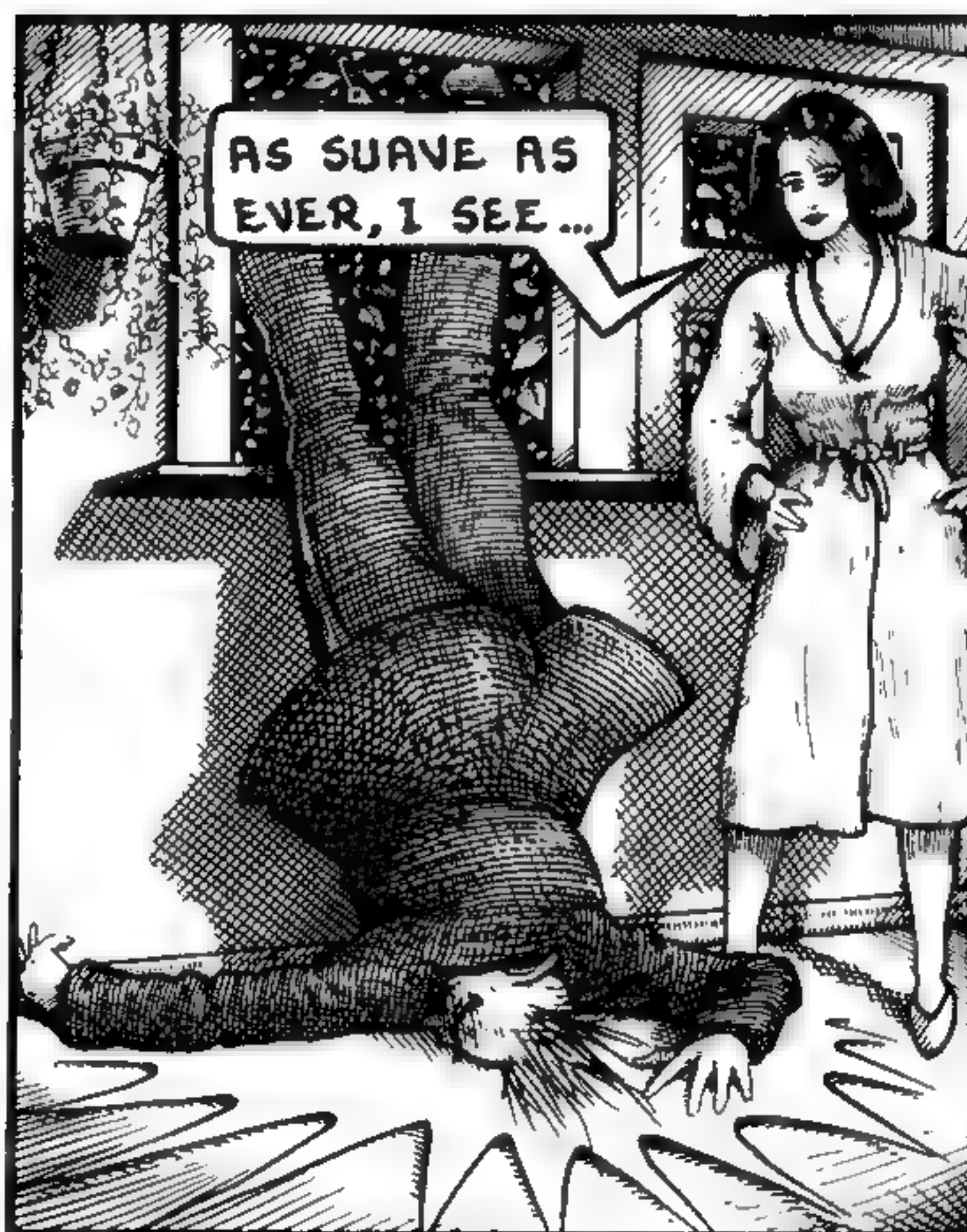


published in 1984 with Last Gasp's help, employs a number of recurring motifs and images that provide a thread through the story. One example is Laszlo's shoes, which appear on the first and last pages and throughout the book as a symbol of his "de-feet." "They seem to reinforce all the bad things that happen to Laszlo," Boswell explains. "They drop on his head. He loses one shoe and it's returned by his rival. And, ultimately, he ends up with a hole in his sole [page 41], which is a very good parallel to his own spiritual condition. It's reflective of his none-too-positive attitude towards women. He thinks he likes them, but the way he treats them is just despicable."

Boswell also utilizes dream imagery to emphasize certain points and provide a "weird sort of synchronicity" in which "a certain characteristic can manifest itself at the same time, in different places." When Laszlo dreams he is searching underwater for the object of his infatuation, Constance, Ken cuts off Laszlo's air supply and hooks Constance, in mermaid form, from the water for himself. In the following panels, the same elements repeat themselves in a jumbled way: Ken cuts off Constance's air supply with his flatulence, and Constance, who escapes into the street, is enticed back to water—albeit drinking water—by Mr. Don, the wooden barber. "I'm not trying to do a comic in [psychological] terms," Boswell points out, "but I always like to have that psychological underpinning."

Although Boswell himself feels *Heart Break Comics* is the "better book... a real labor of love," he recognizes that *Reid Fleming* is the "real fave, obviously the more commercial of the two."

Though Boswell might resurrect Laszlo in a future *Reid Fleming* comic, he thinks a continuing *Heart Break Comics* series would be "really pointless... I think the story is so wrapped up, so resolved, that to carry it on any further would be ridiculous. It would be



Above: Laszlo, the Slavic lover, from *Heart Break Comics*. Below: A mini-biography by Boswell, whose "first love" was movies.

## CINEMA CONFIDENTIAL

IGOR STRAVINSKY WAS A WELL-KNOWN COMPOSER OF BALLETS AND SMALL INSTRUMENTAL WORKS WHEN HE VISITED HOLLYWOOD IN 1930, TRYING TO SELL THE FILM RIGHTS TO HIS D-MAJOR VIOLIN CONCERTO. WHILE ATTENDING A BASEBALL GAME THAT SUMMER HE WAS SPOTTED BY CARL LAEMMLE OF UNIVERSAL STUDIOS, WHO FELT THAT STRAVINSKY WOULD BE IDEAL FOR A ROLE IN A MOVIE THEN IN THE CASTING STAGE. HAVING HAD NO INTEREST SHOWN IN HIS CONCERTO BY ANY-ONE AT ALL, AND BEING SHORT OF MONEY, STRAVINSKY RELUCTANTLY AGREED TO A SCREEN TEST AT THE STUDIO THE FOLLOWING MORNING. ALTHOUGH STRAVINSKY TRIED HARD, THE TEST FAILED TO SATISFY DIRECTOR JAMES WHALE, WHO FELT THAT STRAVINSKY, DESPITE HAVING A NAME THAT WOULD "LOOK GOOD ON A MARQUEE", WAS TOTALLY INEPT AS AN ACTOR. UNCERTAIN OF HIS FUTURE SUCCESS IN MUSIC, THE COMPOSER RETURNED TO RUSSIA; HIS PART WAS TAKEN BY AN ENGLISH BORIS KARLOFF, WHO WAS SOON CAUSE OF HIS SUCCESS IN THE NAME OF THE FILM: **FRANKENSTEIN (1931)**



## INFLUENCES & FAVORITES

While David Boswell hasn't found much in comics that has been important in his development as a cartoonist, he does admire Winsor McCay, who created *Little Nemo* and produced some of the earliest animated films.

Movies and music have had more of a direct impact on Boswell. Josef von Sternberg ranks as Boswell's favorite director because his work represents the "pinnacle of black and white cinematography. There's also a wonderful, subtle sense of humor operating as a counterpoint to the alleged plot or story. [He thought] the best idea for a film is an anecdote, as opposed to a story with a beginning, a middle, and an end." Boswell's work relates to Von Sternberg in that the "scenes tend to be short, but interlock. You always know where you are in the narrative."

Boswell also admires the best films of Buster Keaton, especially the shorts of the early '20s. "There's been nothing funnier since, in screen comedy, or, needless to add, TV. Period."

In music, Boswell admires the French composer Hector Berlioz, whose music, dating from the 19th century, "never grows stale.... His structures are very compact. There's such a precision in Berlioz. I've always found [his

work] a model for constructing my own stories."

Jan Vermeer, the 17th century Dutchman, is Boswell's favorite fine artist because he "seems to have caught moments when nature is holding her breath. There's a tranquility and a stillness which is yet alive. On a technical level, the transparency of tone and color and that quality of light he captures is

very striking to me."

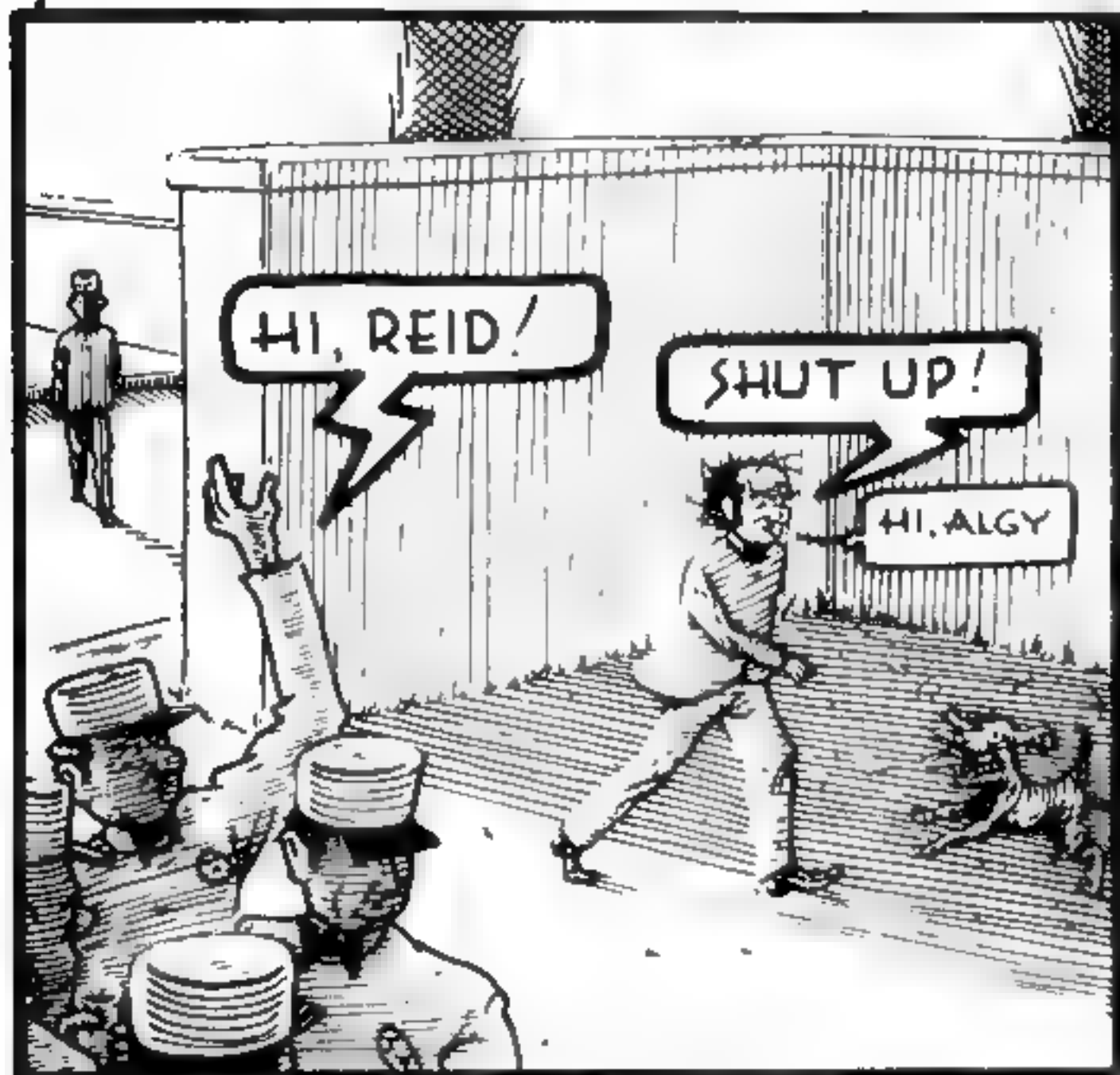
Robert Benchley "still puts me on the floor," says Boswell. "He's the one who said, 'You can divide the world into two kinds of people: those who divide the world into two kinds of people, and those who do not.'"

Other names in his pantheon would, at various times, include such diverse luminaries as Gustave Dore, Laurel and Hardy, Maurice Barrymore, and C.G. Jung.



like bringing Frankenstein's monster back from his watery grave. You can do it, but... it might just diminish one's pleasant memories of that first issue."

**B**oswell began working on a second *Reid Fleming* comic immediately upon the publication of *Heart Break Comics*. A year and a half later, he met with publishers Cat Yronwode and Dean Mullaney of Eclipse at the 1986 Victoria International Cartoon Festival, and they signed him up to do a continuing *Reid* comic book.



"I'm committed to doing *Reid* for at least two years for Eclipse, and possibly as long as five. I intend to keep on turning it out three times a year," he says. "I guess I could conceivably crank out *Reid* every two months leaving time for nothing else, not even supper. But I don't want to be sweating it out every second... I like to have time to think about the work before I do it. What you don't see is often the most important part.

"At times I get kind of nervous when I realize I've been sitting there staring at a blank piece of drawing board for an hour. And none of that mental activity is yet on the page. But

## YOU ARE ALL AMBASSADORS OF GOOD HEALTH AND CLEAN LIVING!



you've got to do that to turn out anything of lasting value. If it's just arbitrary, then it can't be that interesting to the reader. When I'm really stuck, I can always bounce an idea or two off Kathi and get it back in an improved form."

**B**esides Reid Fleming's continued comics appearance, Boswell has more than toyed with the possibility of bringing the milkman to the big screen. Negotiations and plans with Dave Thomas, one of SCTV's McKenzie Brothers, went into advance stages before finally breaking down at the top M-G-M management level. Boswell felt "more relieved than anything else" because the script being considered, which included limited Boswell input, departed from the essence of Reid Fleming. "The first time I spoke to anyone at the studio, he said that Reid would have to be made more sympathetic, which is to totally miss the point of the

character. There were scenes of overt pathos, which really bugged me, because Reid Fleming would never feel sorry for himself."

Boswell has had other TV and movie offers and is currently talking to interested parties, but he is taking a wait-and-see attitude. "I'm not in any big rush to make a film or to get involved with one. If something really good comes up, I'll go with it. But until that happens, I'm really not hot to get a film made. It's much easier to get it wrong than do it right."

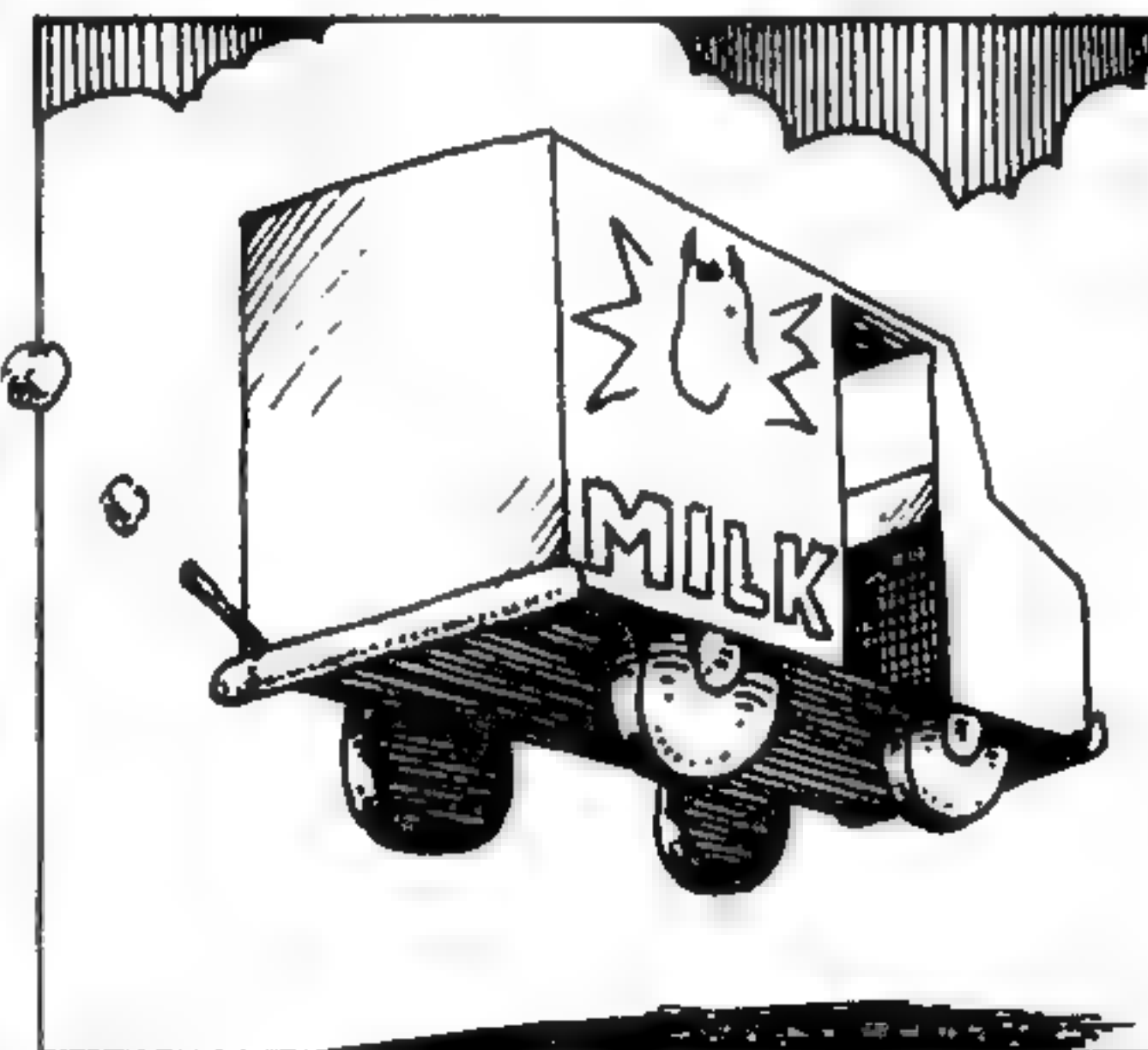
Even though Boswell would enjoy working in film—his first creative passion—he realizes, "It's so hard to get the kind of control that I already have as a cartoonist."

And, as a cartoonist, Boswell says he has the same sort of problem Reid Fleming does. "For him it's keeping a routine, repetitive job interesting. And he'll do anything he can to prevent the job being boring. His job is my job. I've got to think up what he's got to do.

"The nice thing is I've got Reid working for me now. He's increasing my standard of living. I suppose I should share things around, get him a new house, let him find a wallet with 5,000 bucks in it, or something like that."

And as for himself, Boswell says, "I'm not ambitious. I don't have high expectations from life. I just want to insure a steady flow of food and good cheer for my family whilst being careful not to become too much like the bourgeoisie." And, somehow, one feels Boswell will never quite run out of milk.

Illustrations from the second *Reid Fleming* comic. Below: A birth announcement, based on a frame enlargement from Universal Pictures' *Frankenstein* (1931), that Boswell put together on the occasion of the birth of his son.





Carol Lay's

# GOOD GIRLS



"It had something to do with her hair..."  
She's got the job  
(love-lorn columnist for  
a great metropolitan newspaper).  
She's got the friends  
(Ultra-Ma, Stupendo Boy).  
She's got the costume  
(covered with hearts, no less).  
But she just can't fly!  
She's Monica Saunders.  
Ms. Lonelyhearts.  
Oh, yeah.  
She's got the hair,  
too.

PSST! I LIKE YOUR HAIR!  
HOW WOULD YOU LIKE A JOB  
WRITING FOR A GREAT METRO-  
POLITAN NEWSPAPER?

HUH?  
SURE!...  
WHICH  
ONE?



OH,  
BROTHER...  
HOW DID  
I GET MYSELF  
INTO THIS  
MESS?

IT HAD SOMETHING  
TO DO WITH HER HAIR...

Find out why  
they're good.



# A TALE FROM GIMBLEY

WHEN I WAS YOUNG  
I HAD FAITH IN  
MANY THINGS.



I READ THAT I COULD  
STAY HEALTHY WITH  
THE CORRECT DIET.



I ATE ALL THINGS  
BROWN AND GREEN.



IN THE EVENINGS I  
FELT OBLIGED TO  
RELAX MY STRICT DIET



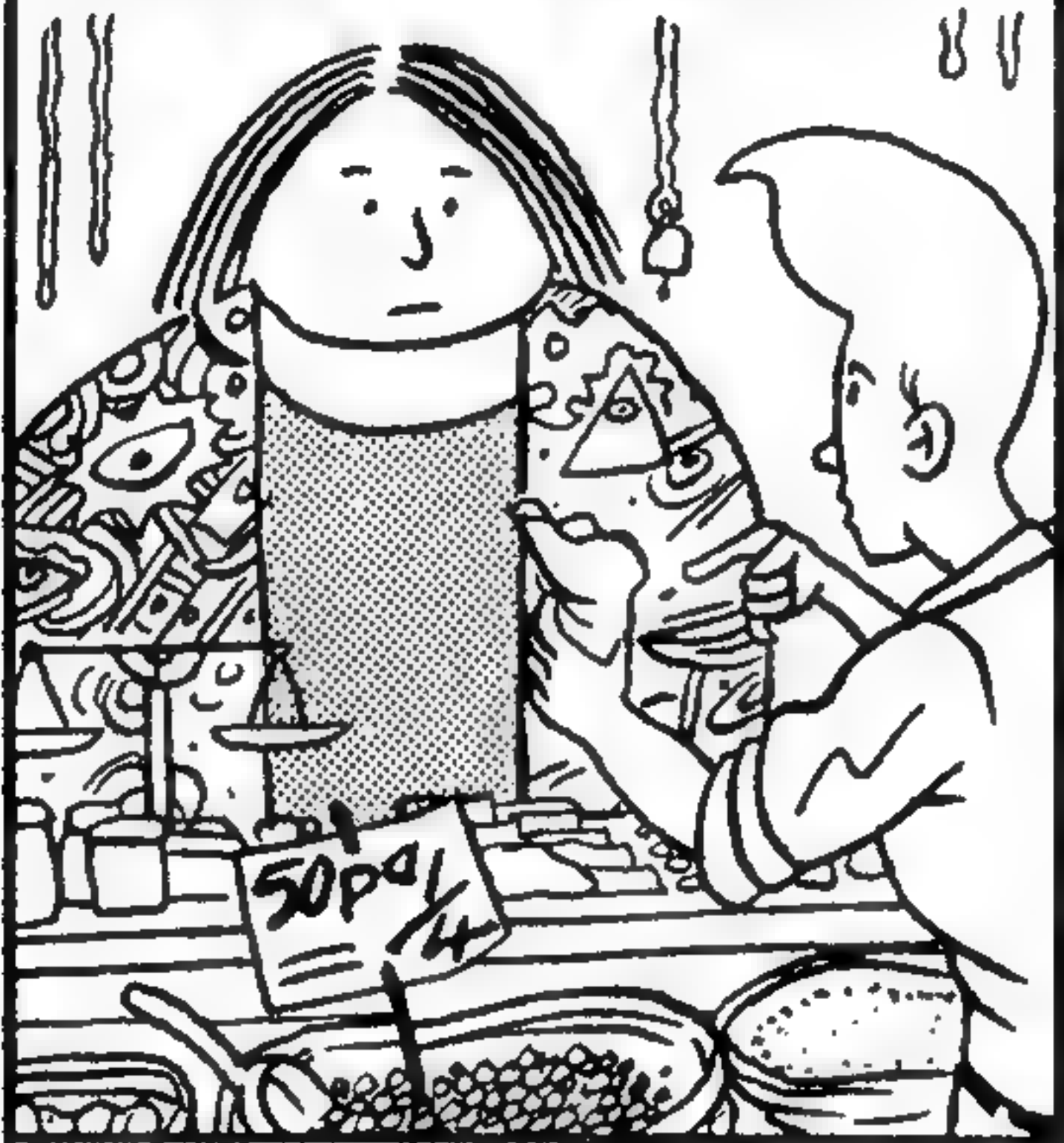
AND IN THE MORNING  
I'D DEVOUR ORANGES  
AND YOGHURT.



BUT STILL I REMAINED  
A SICKLY YOUTH.



I TRIED TO COMPLAIN.



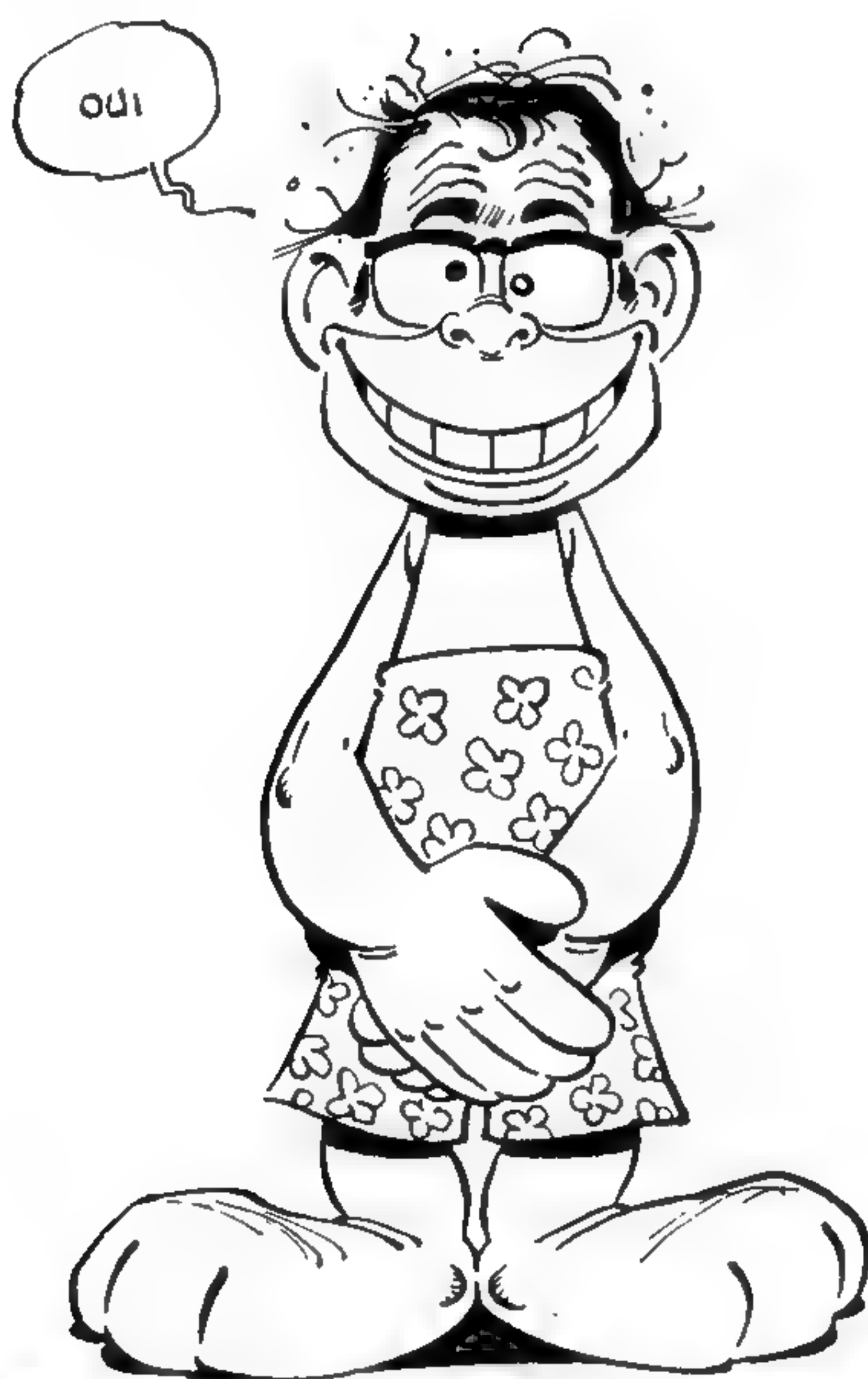
BUT IT SEEMS LENTILS  
COME WITH NO  
GUARANTEES.



I STILL BELIEVE  
IN HEALTHY  
EATING.. BUT  
ONLY IN MOD-  
ERATION.







# GOTLIB!

Marcel Gotlib is one of the trendsetting humorists in the world of French Comics.

Gotlib started out in the mid-'60s at the legendary *Pilote* magazine, collaborating with writer Rene Goscinny on a series of wacky satirical two-pagers, the "Dingodossiers." Goscinny, of course, was at the time also working on *Asterix*, and the success of that series eventually led to his leaving Gotlib on his own; Gotlib promptly renamed the column "Rubrique-a-Brac," added a roster of continuing characters (including his science professor, a tiny ladybug, and Sir Isaac Newton—all of which appear this issue), and went on to greater and greater success. The series was collected into five large, handsome hard-back volumes, and Gotlib became one of the more popular cartoonists of the country.

In 1973, Gotlib, along with fellow cartoonists Claire Bretecher and Nikita Mandryka, split from *Pilote* in order to form one of the first real French "alternative" comics publications, *L'Echo des Savanes*. Gleefully profane, obscene, and scatological, sometimes terribly self-indulgent, often dead on target, *L'Echo* provided the trio with the opportunity to do some of their most liberating work.

Originally conceived as a 48-page quarterly in which each artist would contribute 16 pages, the magazine quickly went monthly, adding a roster of other contributors. (Moebius's seminal "White Nightmare" appeared in an early issue of *Echo*, as did much of the early work by Francis Masse, regularly showcased in *RAW*.) After fewer than

10 issues, however, both Gotlib and Bretecher left the magazine. Bretecher went on to a career as France's answer to Jules Feiffer with her satirical one-page feature "Les Frustrés" in the weekly newsmagazine *Le Nouvel Observateur*, while Gotlib decided to found another magazine.

*Fluide Glacial*, which debuted in 1975, remains one of the most successful and popular French comics magazines.\* It recently celebrated its 100th issue, and neither it nor Gotlib has shown any sign of slowing down. Although his artistic output has been erratic in the past five years, Gotlib currently produces at least three to four pages of new material an issue, in addition to overseeing the magazine and writing the often hilarious editorials.

Gotlib's main inspirations, as he has often stated, are Harvey Kurtzman's *MAD* and Tex Avery's M-G-M cartoons. He also shares with Rene Goscinny a fondness for puns, which makes for some interesting translation problems. His tidy, almost anal-retentive style of cartooning belies a savagely anarchistic, uninhibited comedic flair. If we printed some of his later work, we'd be run out of town on a rail.

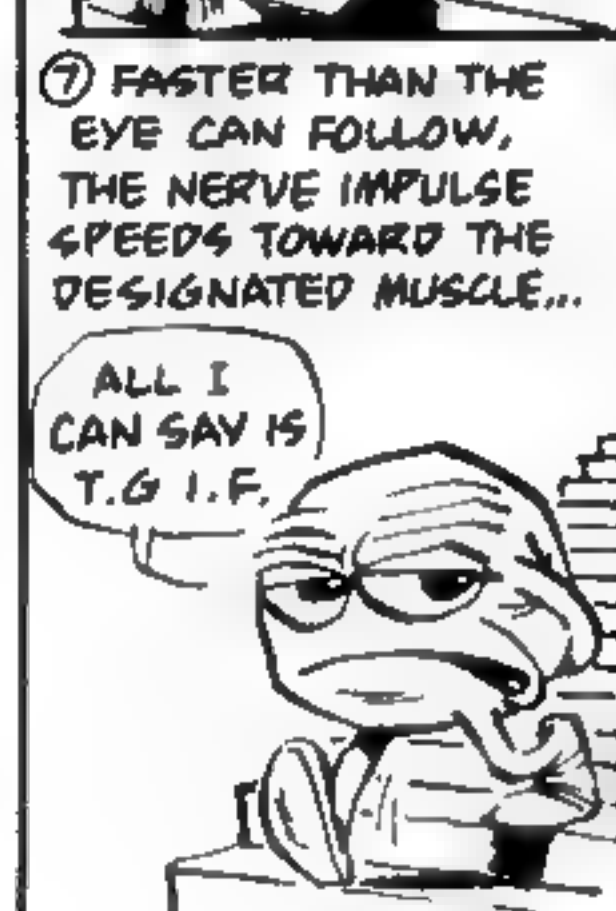
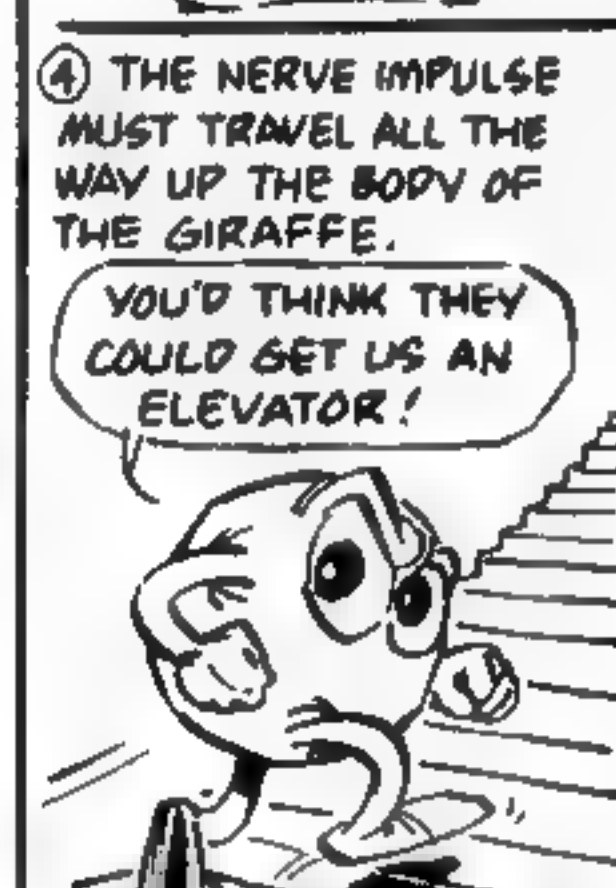
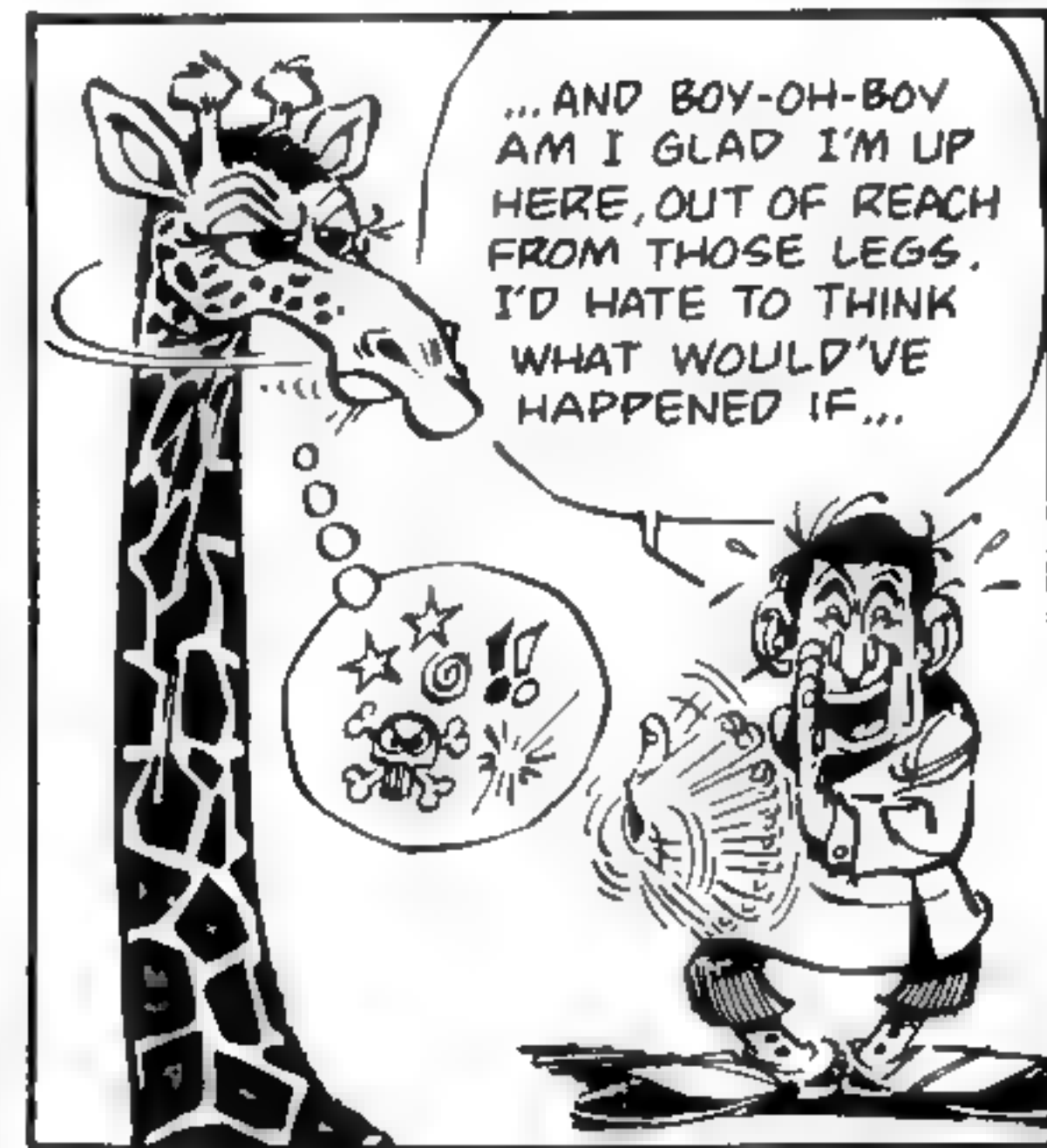
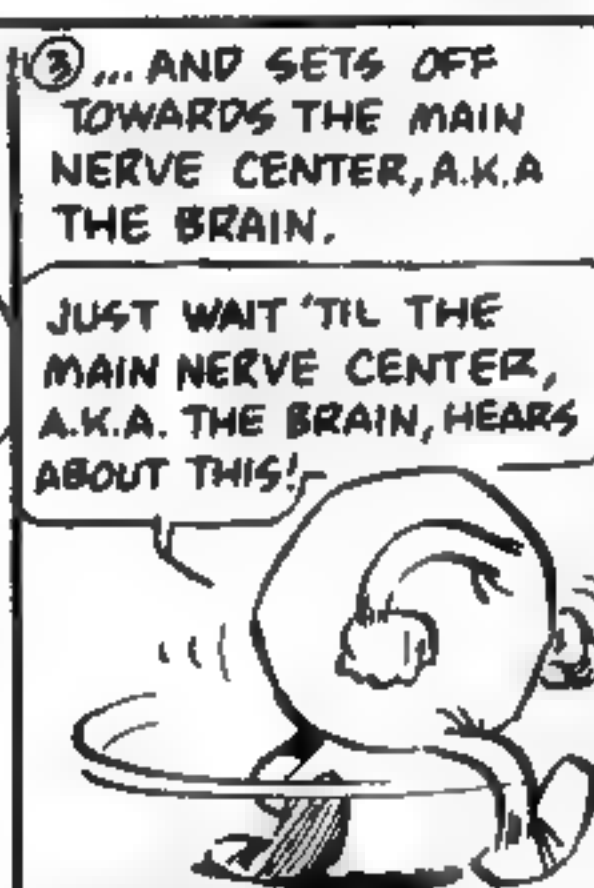
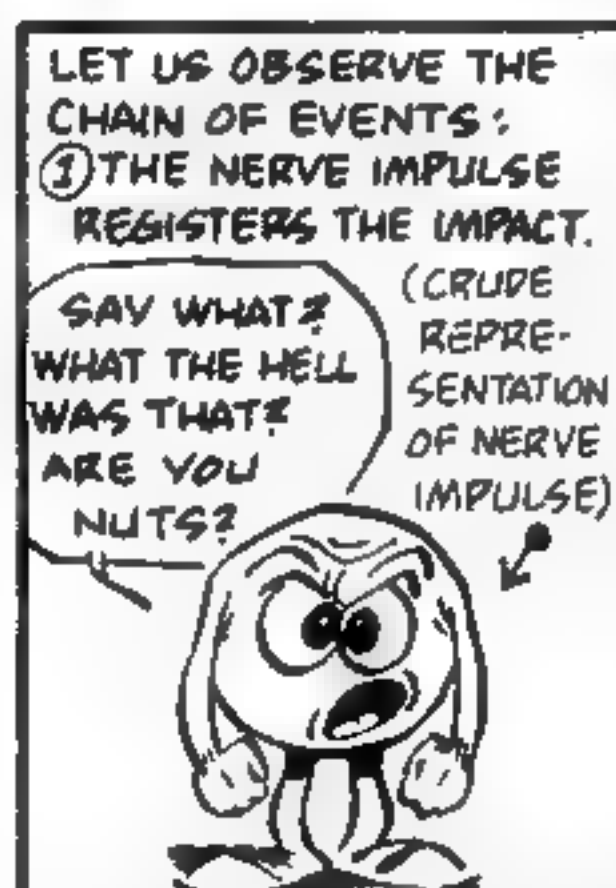
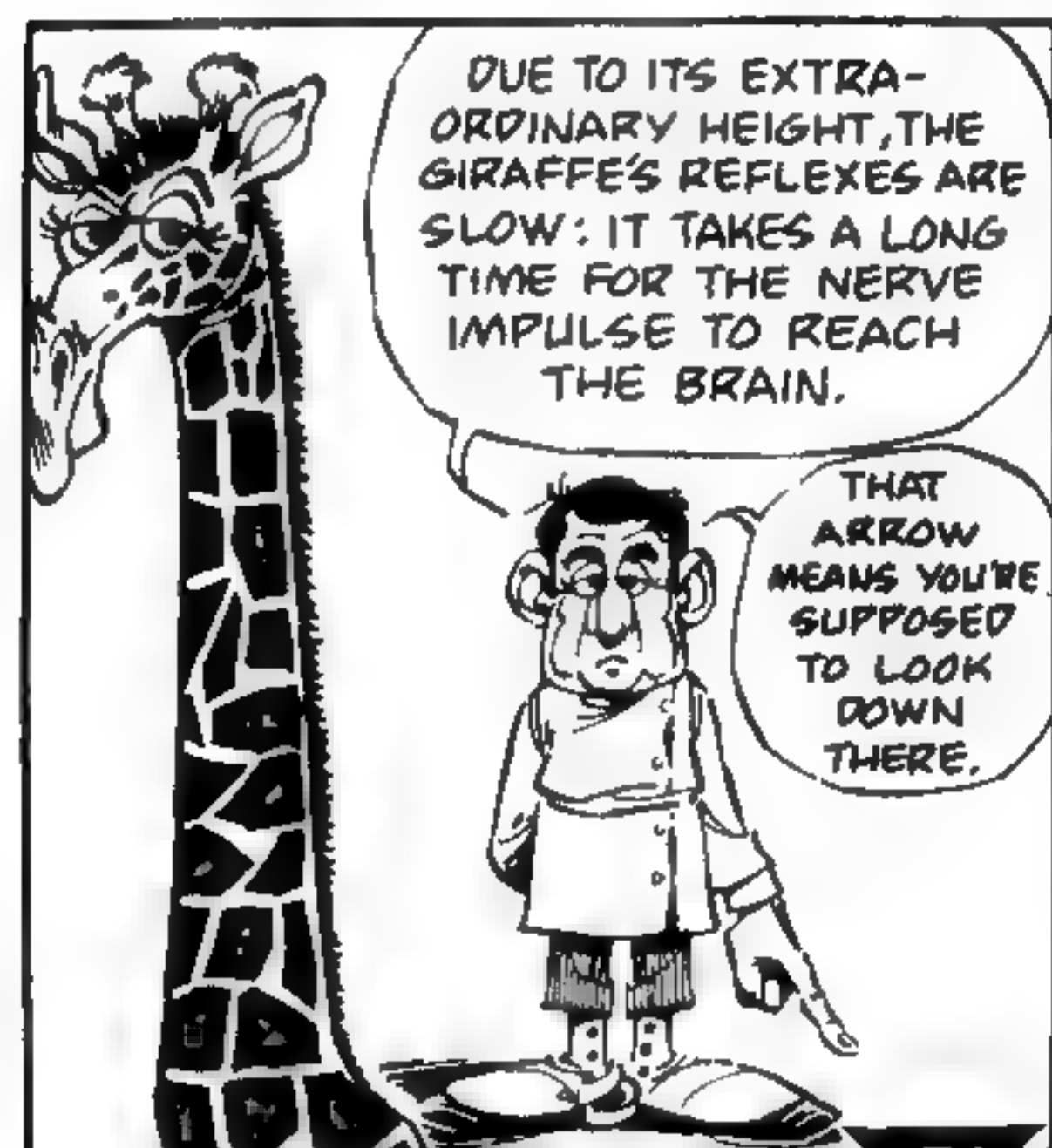
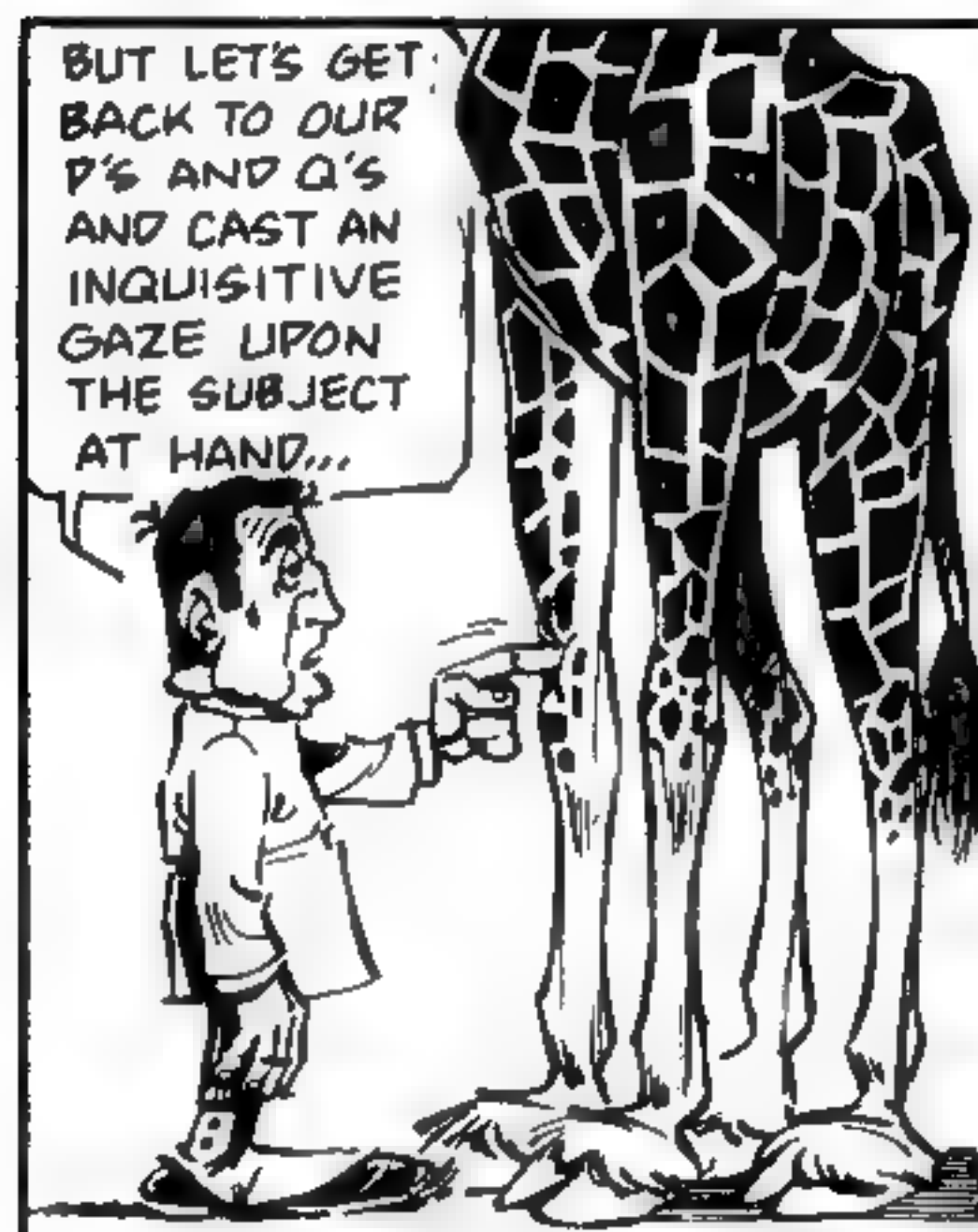
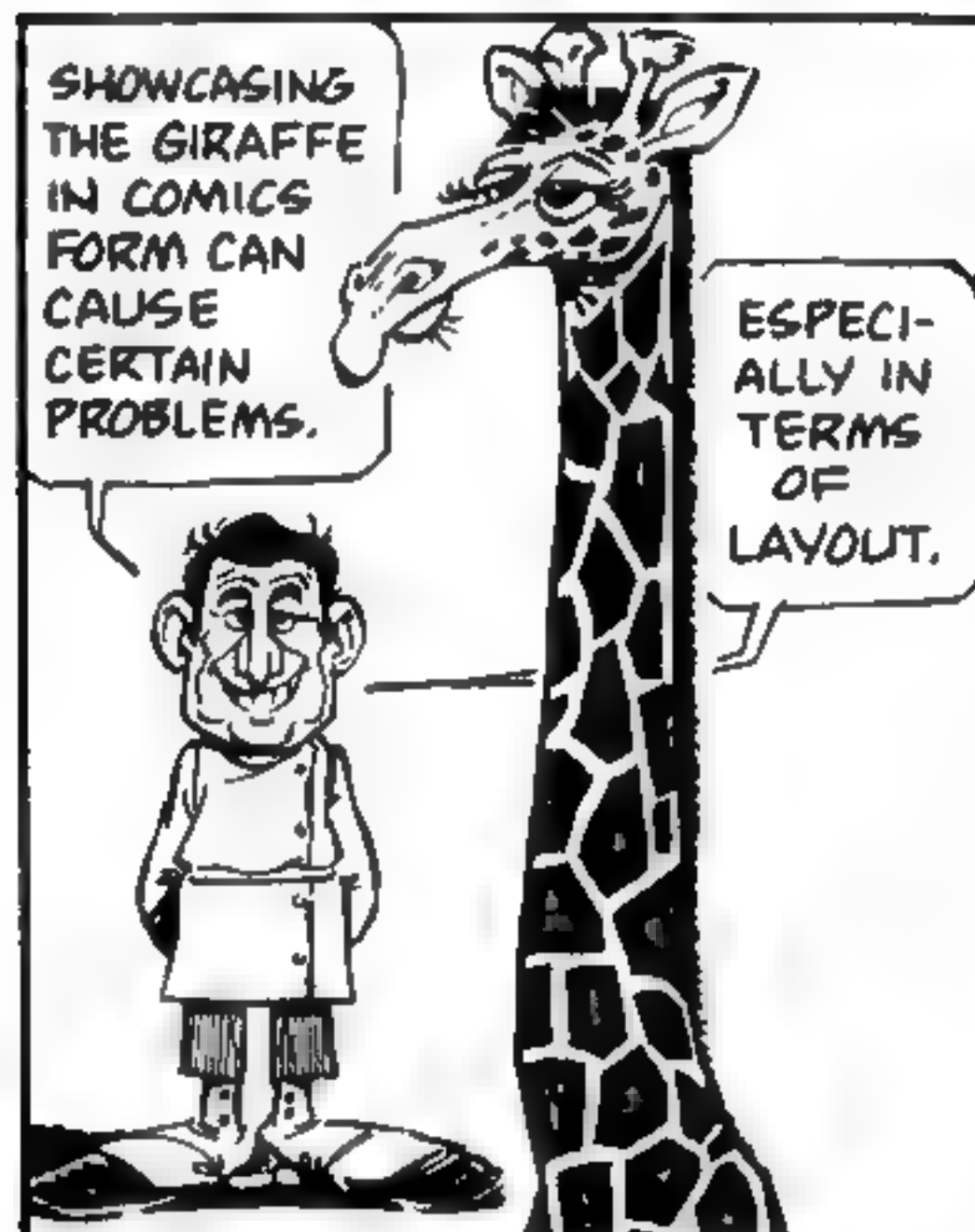
Which doesn't mean we won't, someday.

—Kim Thompson

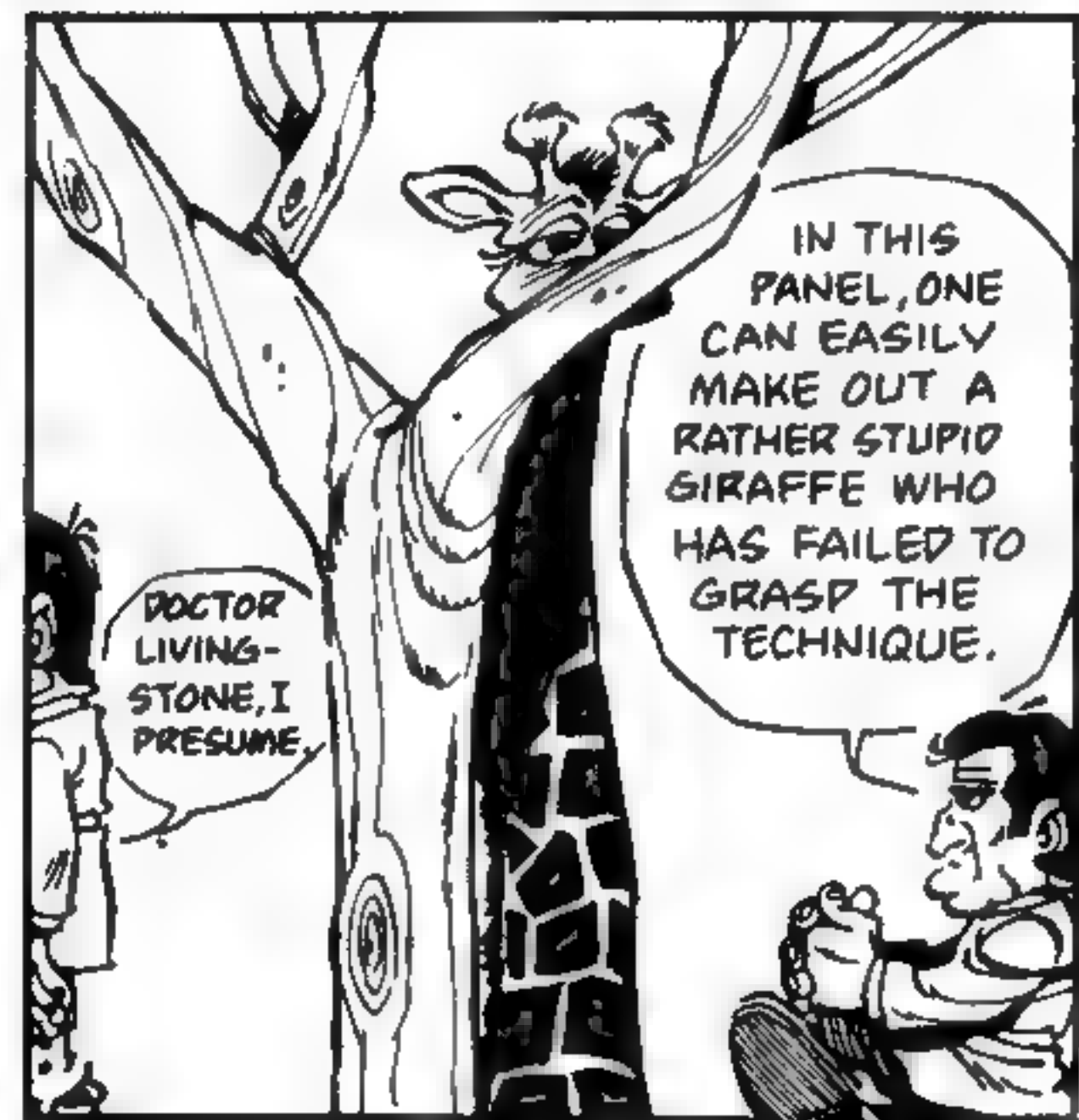
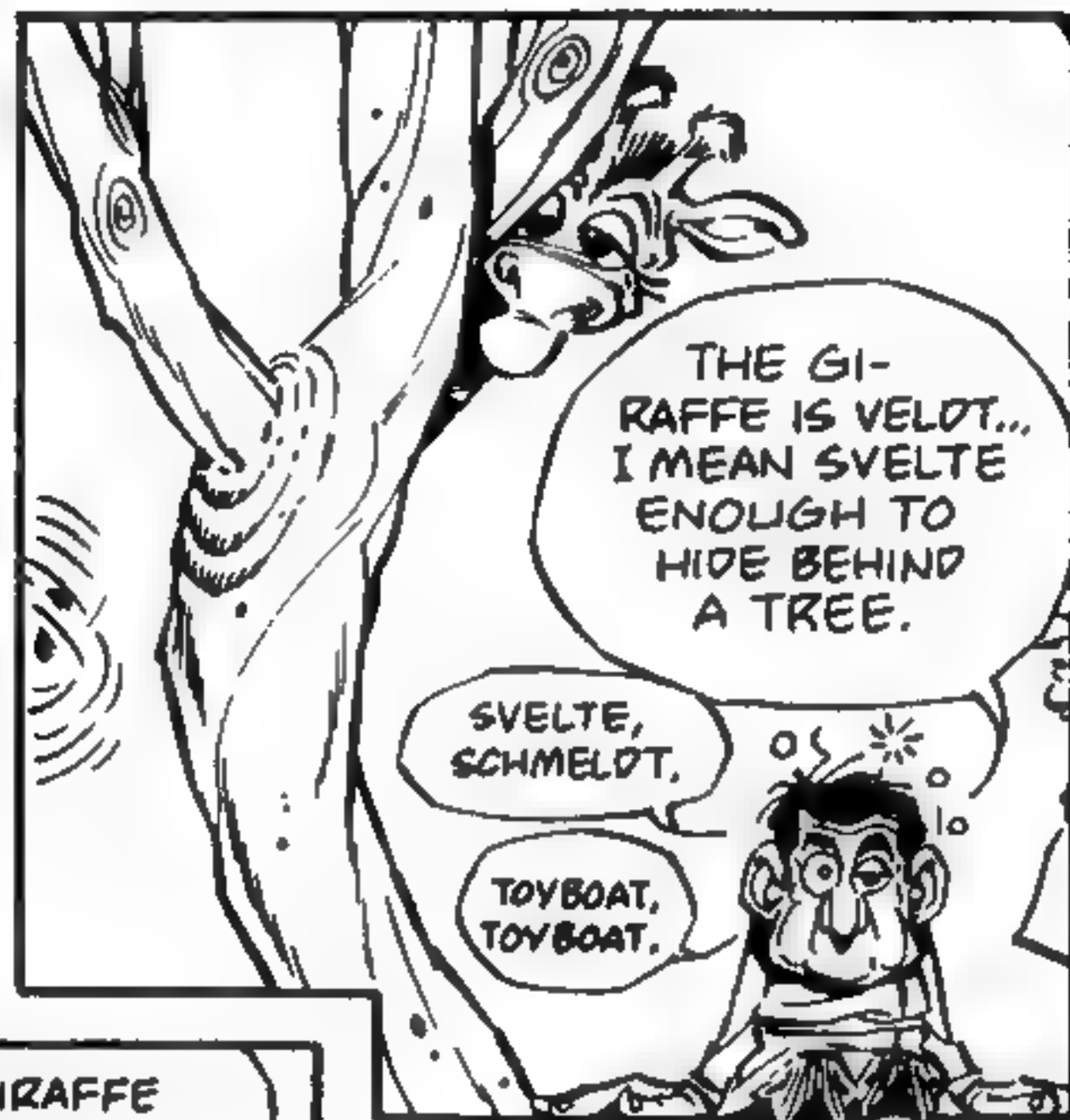
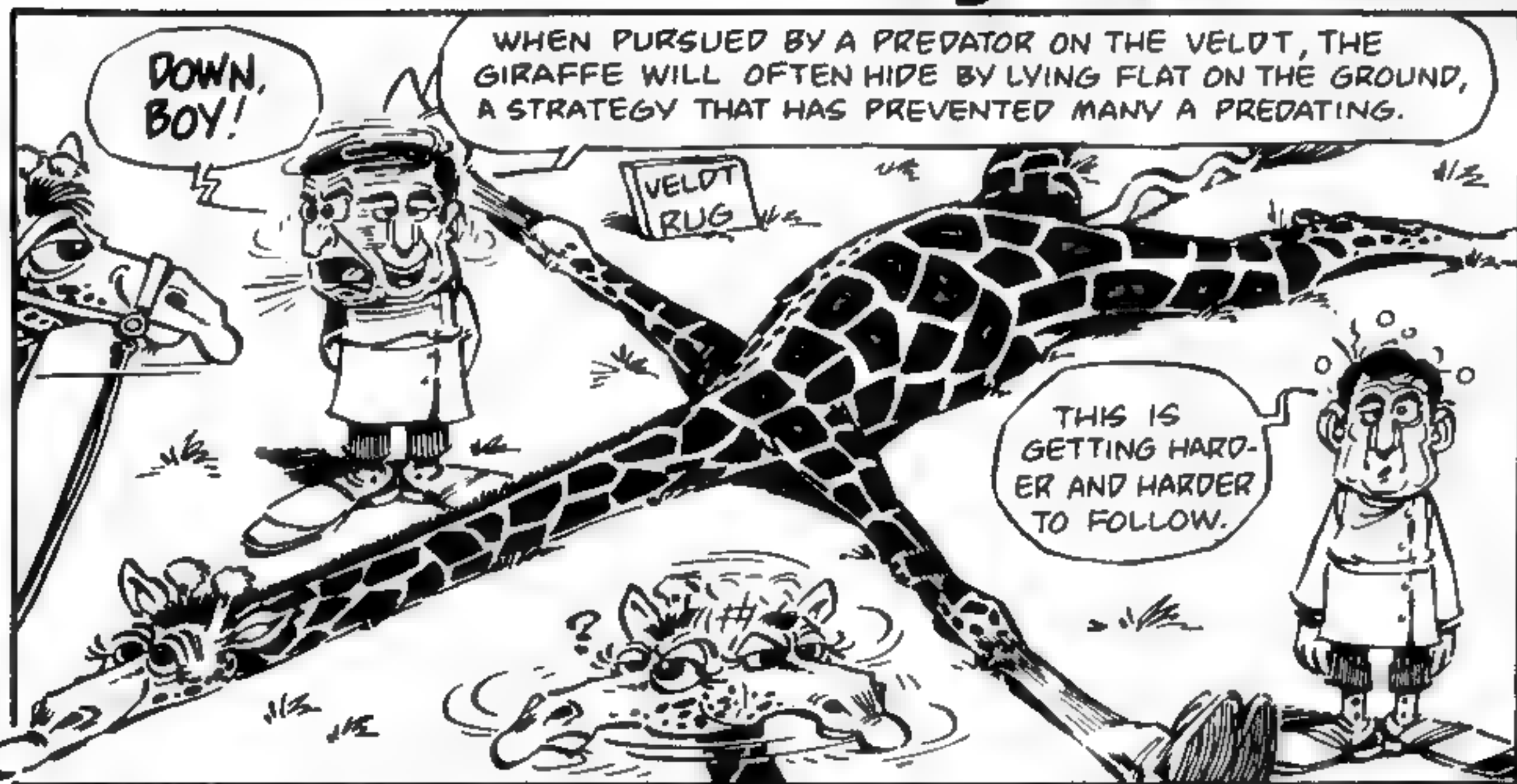
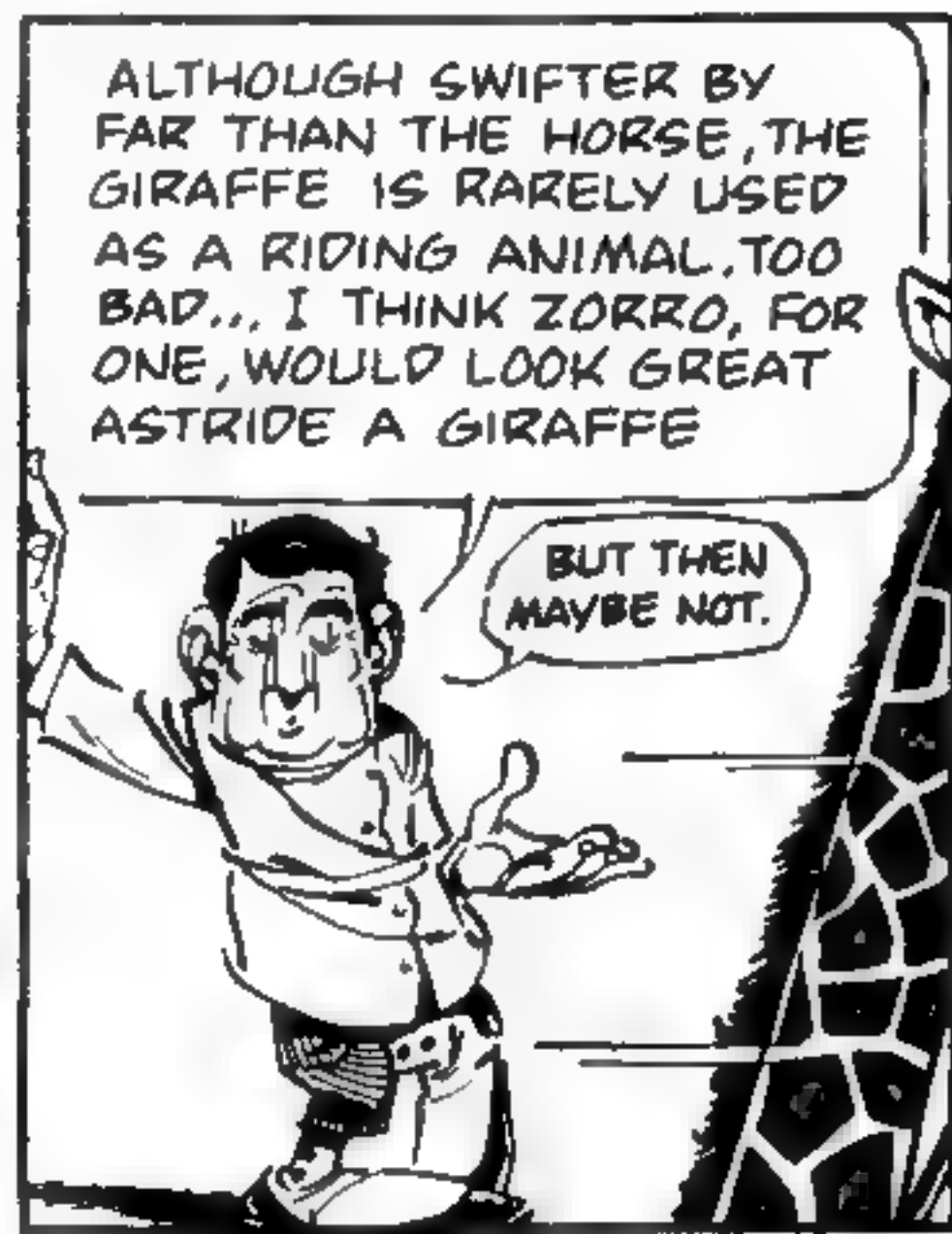
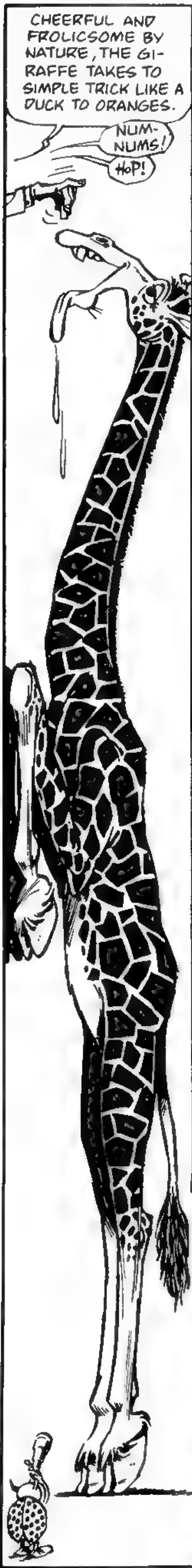
\* One of the current star features of *Fluide Glacial*, Lelong's "Carmen Cru," will be appearing regularly in Renegade Press's French Ice.



# THE GIRAFFE









# THE WONDERS OF SCIENCE

Ecologists predict that soon cigarette smokers will be able to practise their anti-social habit in relative peace."

BECAUSE the Earth's atmosphere is SHRINKING at an alarming rate, smokers will be able to avoid polluting the breathable air by walking above it on

i-SLITS

Go away, I'm  
an asterisk

charlie  
Trumper  
© 84.

ah that  
condor  
moment

Got  
light?

caught

outer space

Descending  
ozone  
layer

③ sweet  
fresh air →

LOOK SON,  
E PLURIBUS UNUM

can't

○

Go away, I'm  
an asterisk.



**zap!**

Pipe and cigar smokers however will still be obliged to beam up to the moon.

# THE WONDERS OF SCIENCE

No. 11

EVERYBODY LOVES THE GOVERNMENT

IM PROFESSOR BEAN  
and I LOVE the  
GOVERNMENT

I'm a six-fingered clone of Harry McGinnis and I love the Government!

i'm Rubbery  
Rodney  
and I love  
the  
Government



LUMD AGB  
BUMMINT



I'm a dog  
and I love  
the Governor

and I love  
the Government



I'm an ink-stain

I'm the  
Trajectory  
of Newton's  
apple

'm Newton's  
apple and I  
love the  
Government

I'm the  
Experimental  
Foundation of  
the Quantum  
Theory

im a  
jobby

im Charlie  
trumper  
and i like  
drinx

I'm Charlie Trumper's signature

Charlie  
Trumper  
© '84

in fresh air

61mp



Today we are going to pay a visit to the local alehouse frequented by those eggheads from the secret research labs at Grayson Manor - come and sample the brew at THE HAEMOGBLIN



The Haemoglobin is a busy pub and Prof. Bromide always found it difficult to reach the lavatory. So the Prof. has designed his personal 'incontinence bag' cunningly disguised as a shopping bag.



When full, the bag can be disposed of and replaced with another.



Ever wondered who requests those terrible records on the Juke Box? Well the Juke Box in the Haemoglobin has been fitted with a special 'Manilow B-side' safety device...



And when the evening wears the on, and the side-effects of alcohol begin to take effect...



# THE WONDERS OF SCIENCE

It is time to bring out Doc. Myopia's patent glasses.



Uh! Sober again!

Hic! Another Atom-Blasted barman!

© Charlie Trumper '84

## THE

WAVES



Here are some explanations of a few scientific terms -

## O

OSMOSIS

~ my twice removed Jewish uncle -

Shalom



## N

DOPPLER EFFECT

~ caused by excessive alcohol consumption



## R

RHEOSTAT

~ obscure mining village in Siberia -

Ya it's good



## S

SOUND

For me it's a special memory -

pardon?



## I

ISOBARS

~ Help you & works

RESTO



## E

EINSTEIN

~ close friend of my uncle Osmosis -

Ozzy! My friend, already



## N

CHARLIE'S LAW

~ To every action there is always a Burt Bacharach -

Burt Bacharach

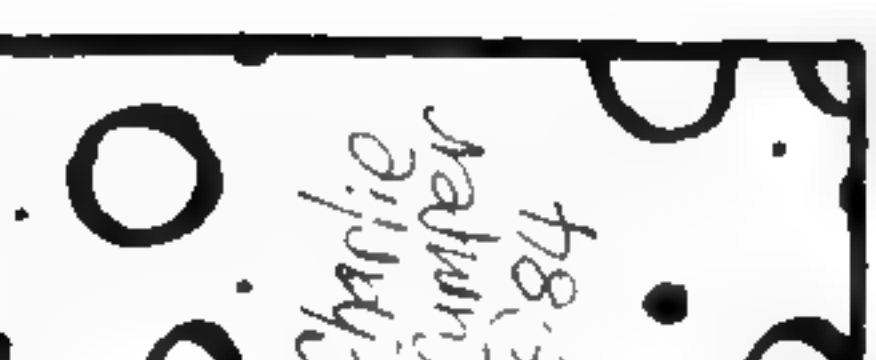


## E

CHARLIE'S LAW

~ To every action there is always a Burt Bacharach -

Burt Bacharach



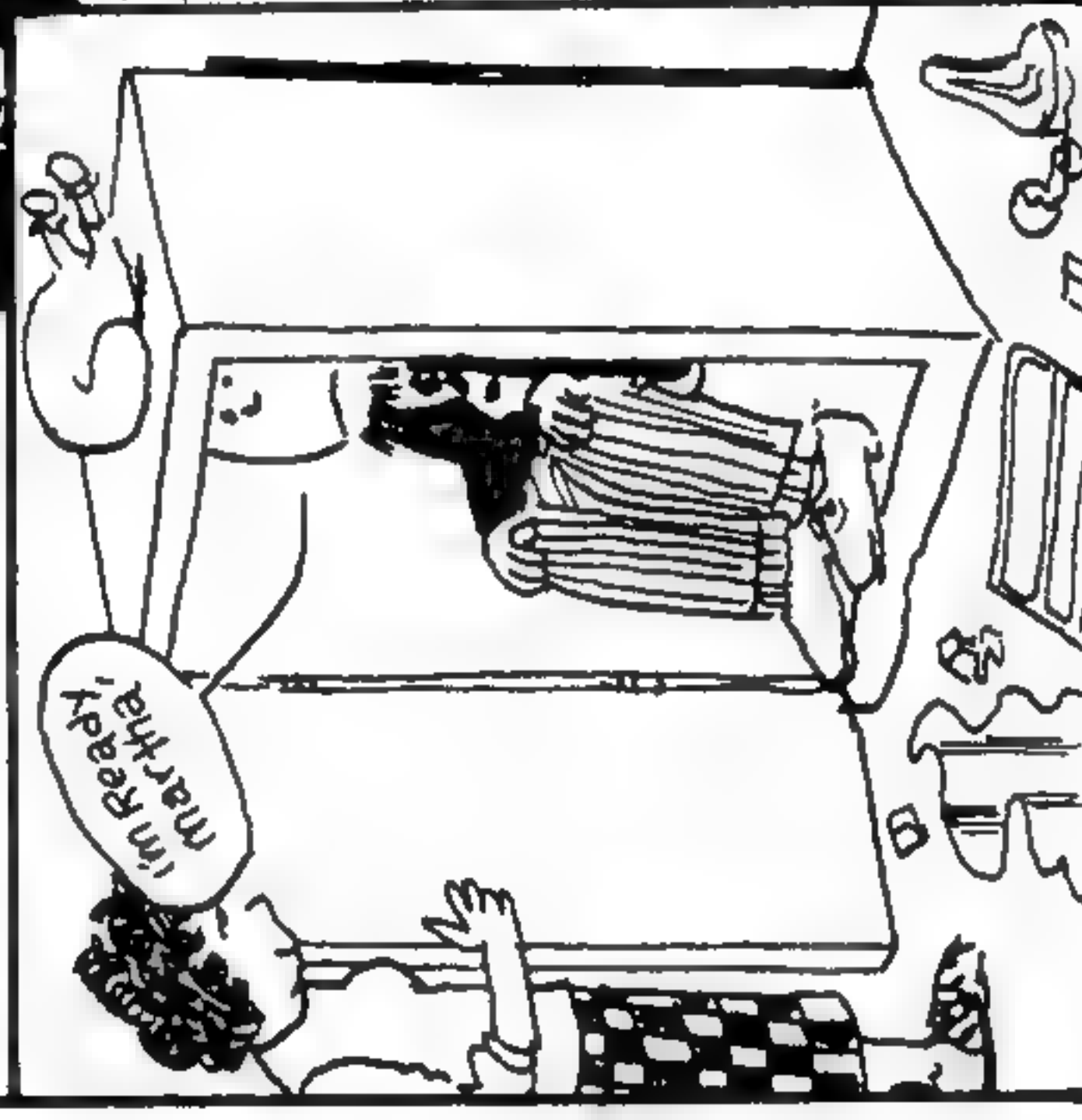
© Charlie Trumper '84



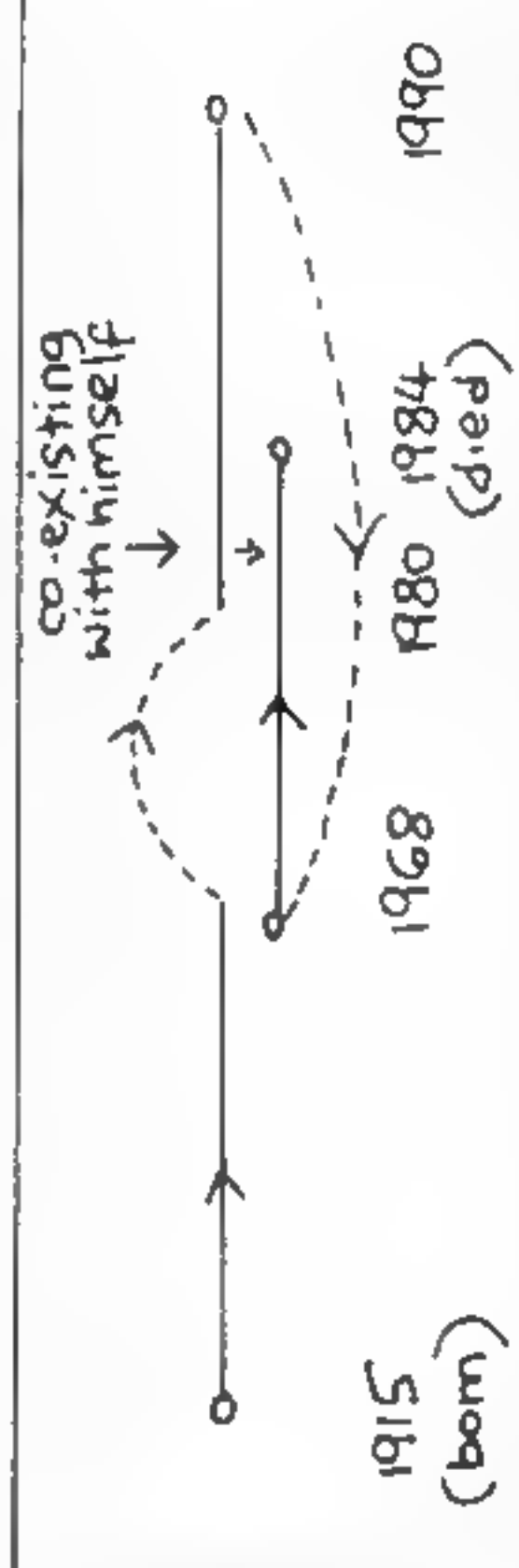
# THE WONDERS OF SCIENCE

THE GREAT PROFESSOR BEAN HAS DIED AT HIS HOME IN KENT!!

He had been conducting experiments in suspended animation in which he placed himself in an ice-block in the kitchen freezer



It was during a party held by his wife that one of the guests seeking ice for the cocktails inadvertently stabbed the professor through the heart.

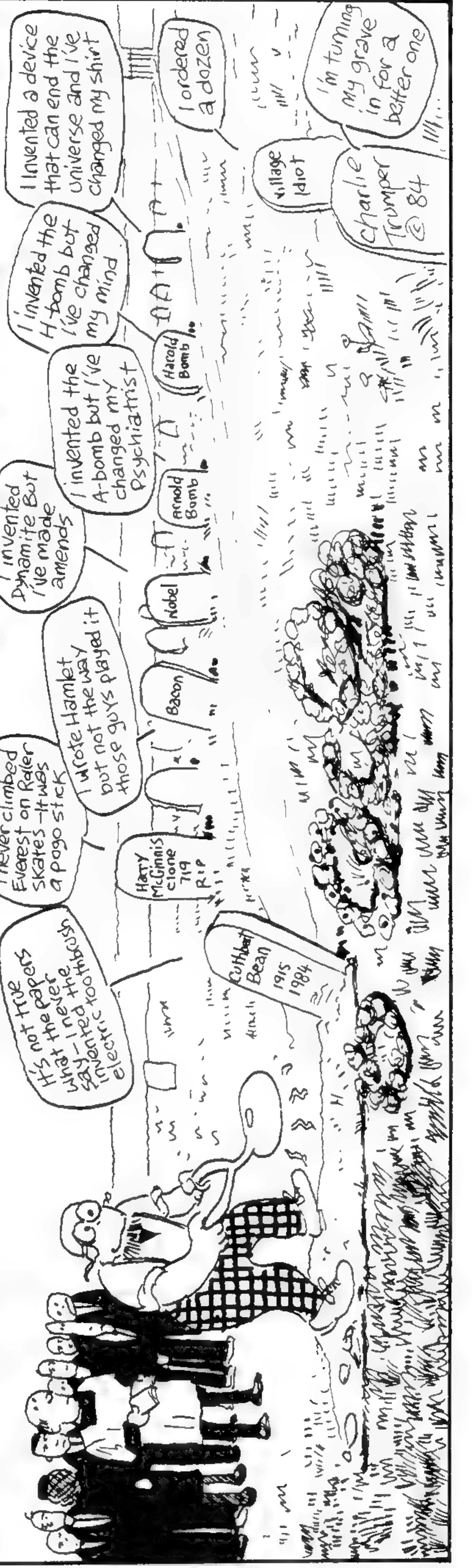


In 1990 the Prof. will travel back in time to just before 1968 to fill in the missing portion of his life. It is thus not easy to say how old he was when he died last night



# THE WONDERS OF SCIENCE

Due to an amazing time-travel situation explained last week in the obituary of the legendary Professor Bean, the Prof. was able to attend his own funeral. He flew in from Wisconsin yesterday in time to unveil his new invention at the ceremony—a seismological device that can detect great people turning in their graves—





To encourage consumers to continue purchasing certain products, manufacturers make sure that goods become obsolete after a certain period of time!

Examples of this built-in obsolescence include:

The handle falling off a tea-pot ~

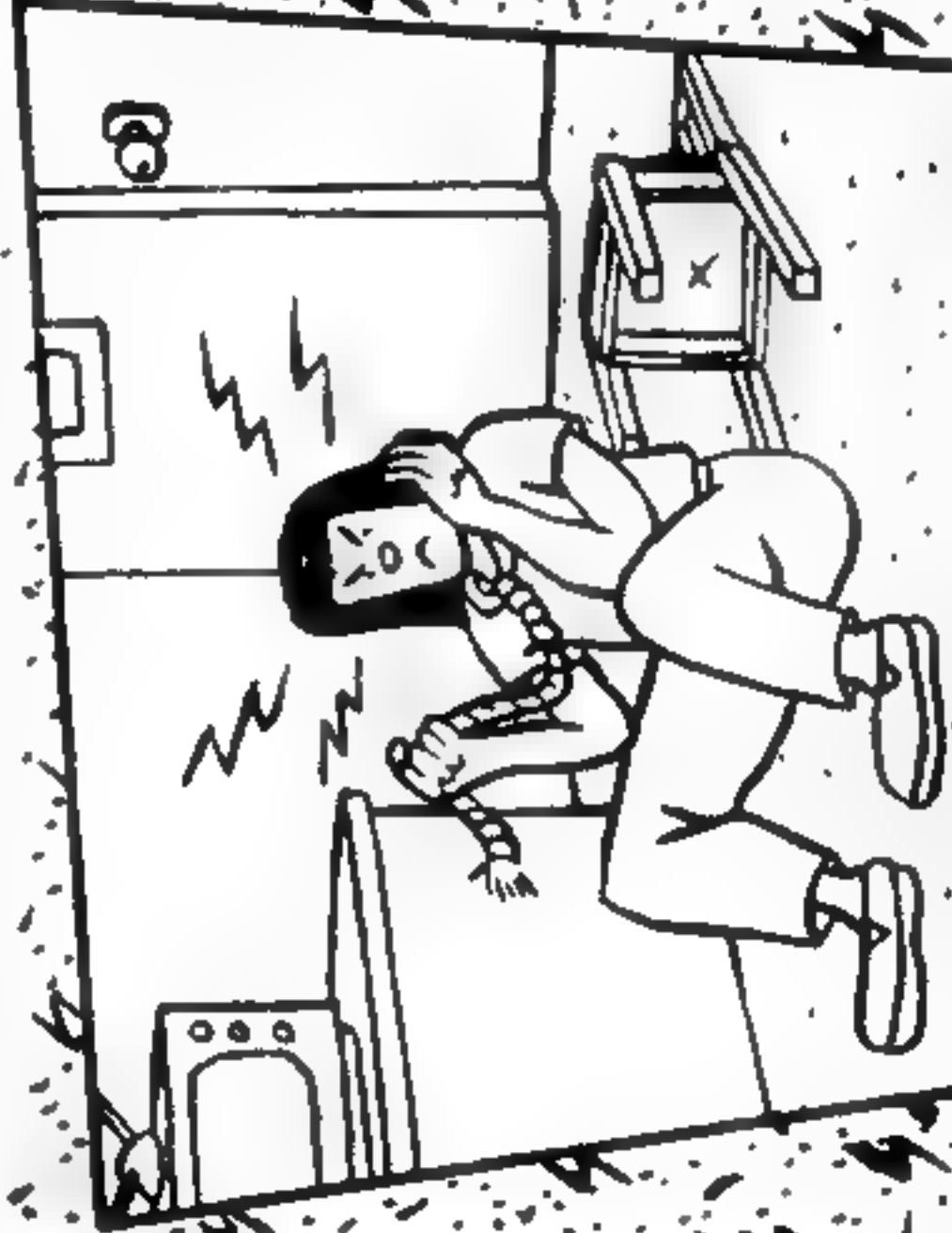


Razors becoming blunt after just one shave ~

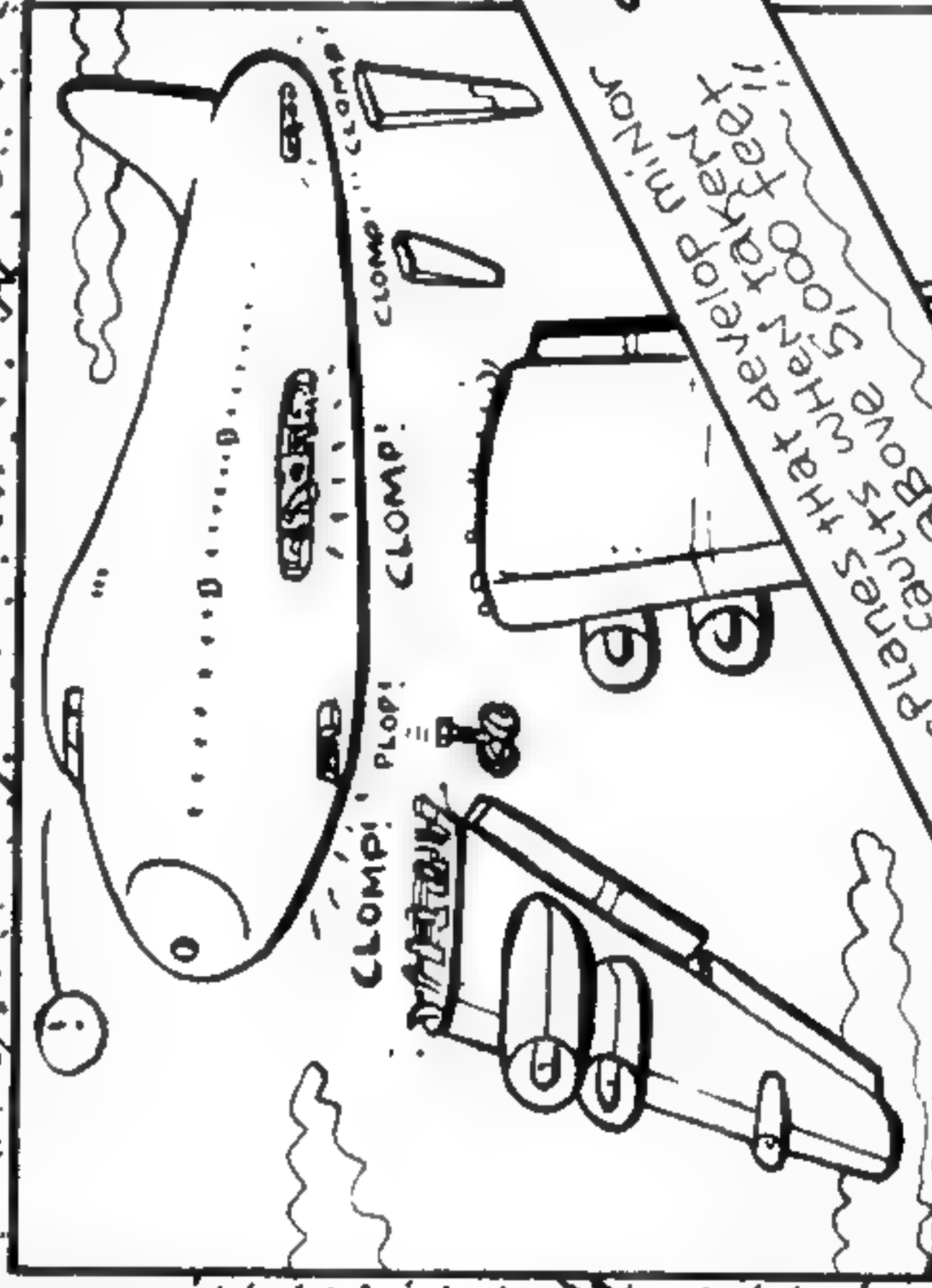


The boffins at Grayson Manor have been asked to design built-in obsolescence factors for other products ~

Thus every rope in three has a special built-in obsolescence



Logos that disintegrate after only 13 weeks use



Complaints that-way.

BRITISH AIR



Planes that develop minor faults when taking off above 5,000 feet x

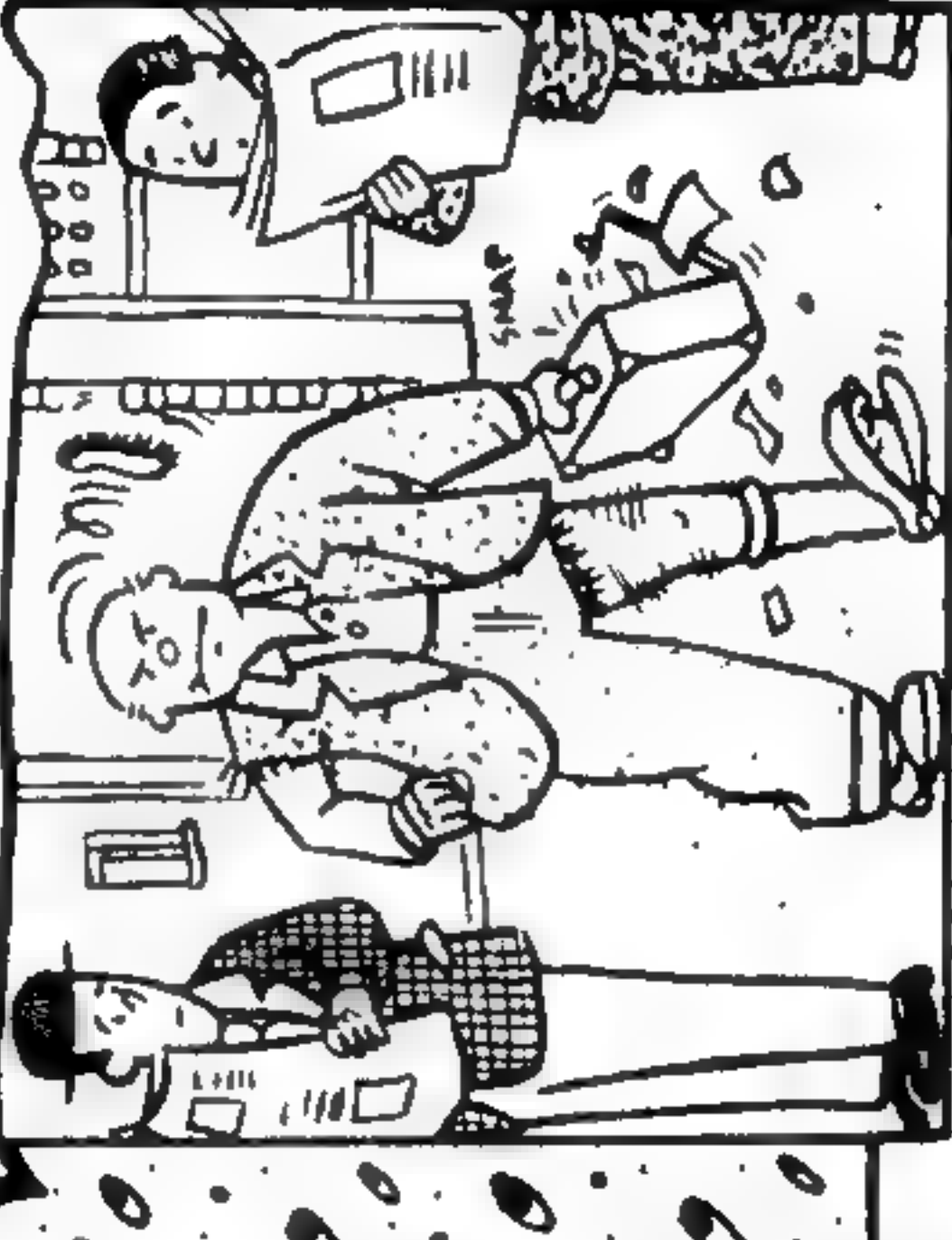
charlie tromper ©84

# THE WONDERS OF SCIENCE

While researching in the cence papercut the conculc the altogether!

area of built-in week) the conculc the altogether! While researching in the cence papercut the conculc the altogether!

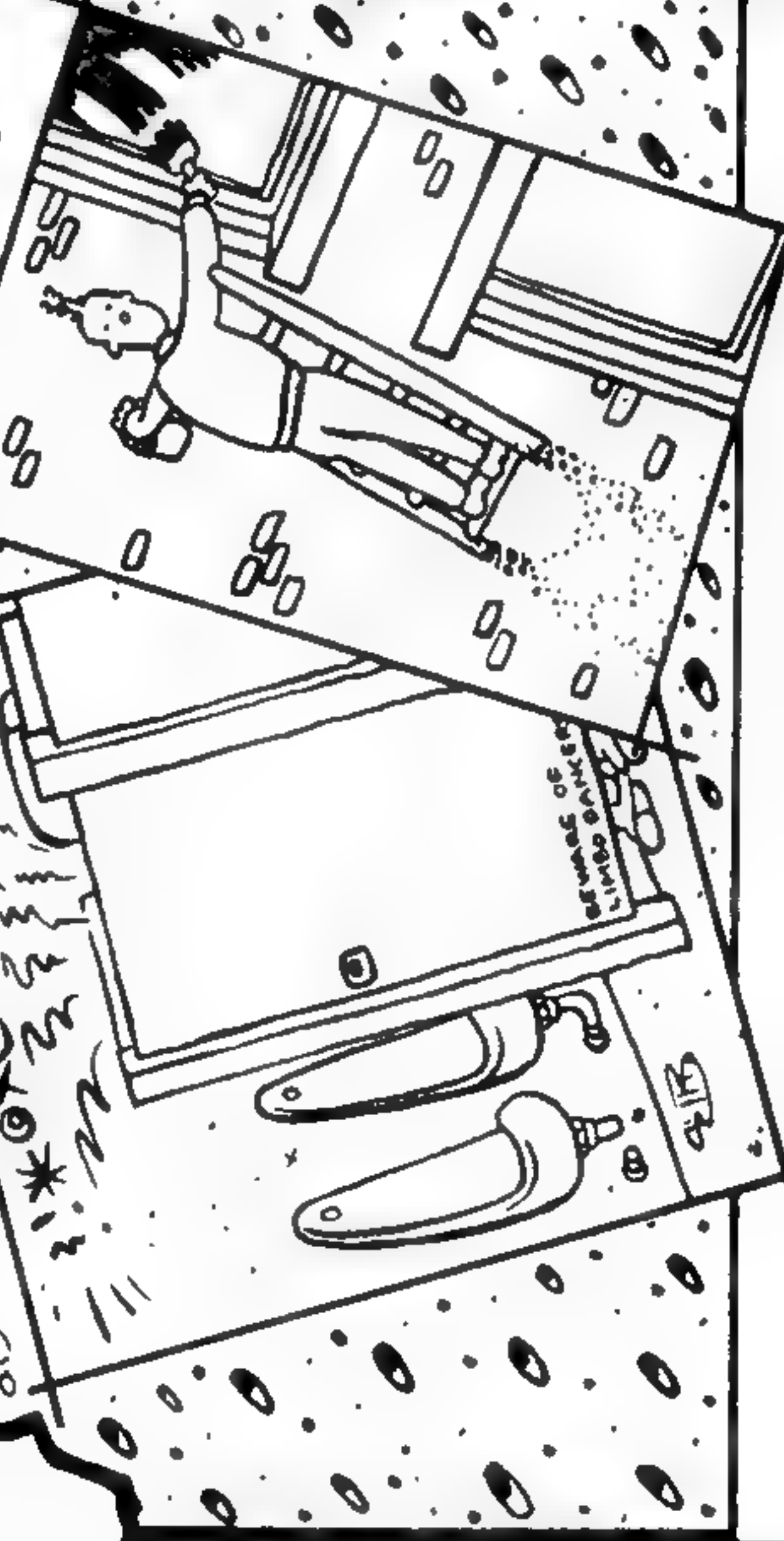
This would force the consumer to keep buying rather than using a worthless good no matter the inconvenience



consequently flooded products that could become floodable products that 'Bio-degradable paper that such as the toilet paper that disintegrates after a set time

'Bio-degradable paper that such as the toilet paper that disintegrates after a set time

The bio-degradable step-ladder



This research may be extended to other areas of life... with the sole giro that expires after a 3-month period -



shucks! is nothing sacred?



sorry son no cash for you!

CASH HELP X



# BLINDED

WITH

# SCIENCE

I'm unemployed - can I have some money?

You can't have unemployment benefit until we get form UB-4,735 back from Central Office in Auchttermucht...

In order that we can count your contributions paid in the relevant tax year to assess your entitlement in the Chinese New Year...

If you wish to claim Supplementary benefit in the interim go down two flights of stairs and enter the door marked MARTIAN BUSINESS STUDIES ~

they blinded me with science

When do I get paid?

There's a cheque in the post

Charlie Trumper © 84

## WONDERS OF SCIENCE

Did You Know? - That an ordinary hen's egg is capable of supporting tremendous weight on its vertical axis..



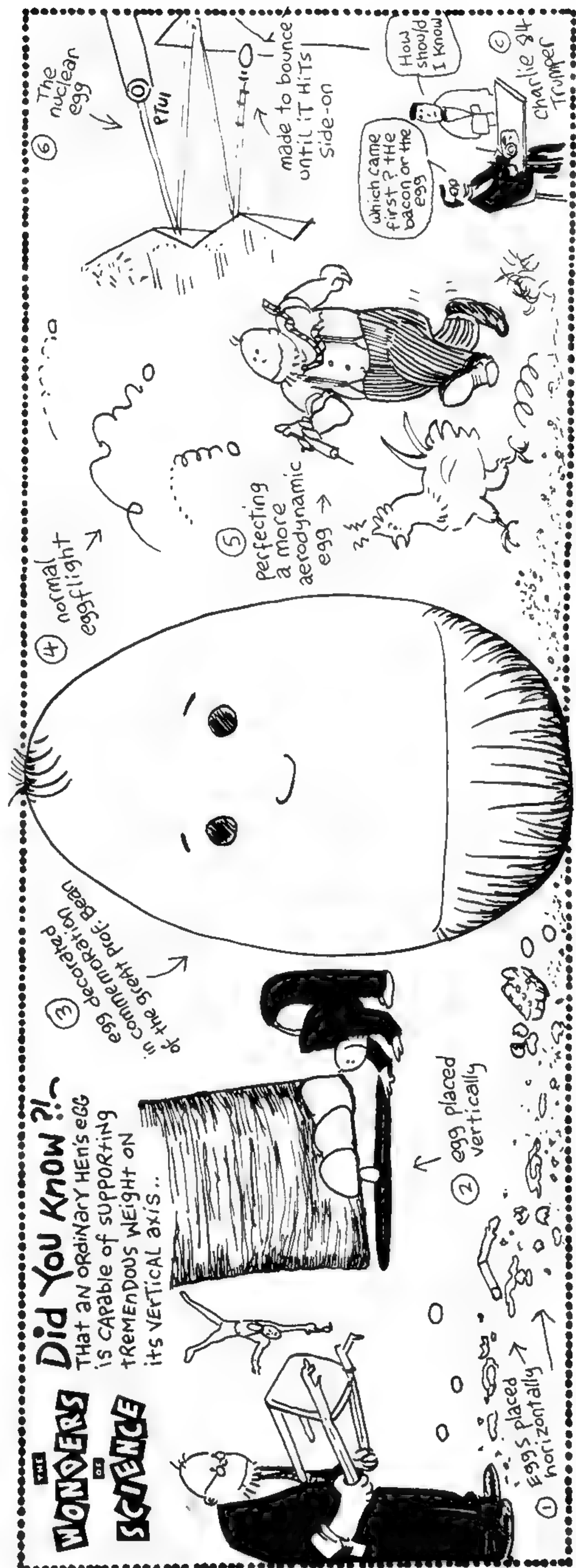
egg placed vertically

2



eggs placed horizontally

1





The human body is the most intricate and complicated organism known to the human mind. The millions of its parts functioning together to make a machine of incomparable efficiency!

# THE WONDERS OF SCIENCE

the Human body.

It ain't much of a career but it pays the rent

Darling! You'll never guess what happened at the office today

I bet I'd look really wicked in that blue kimono..

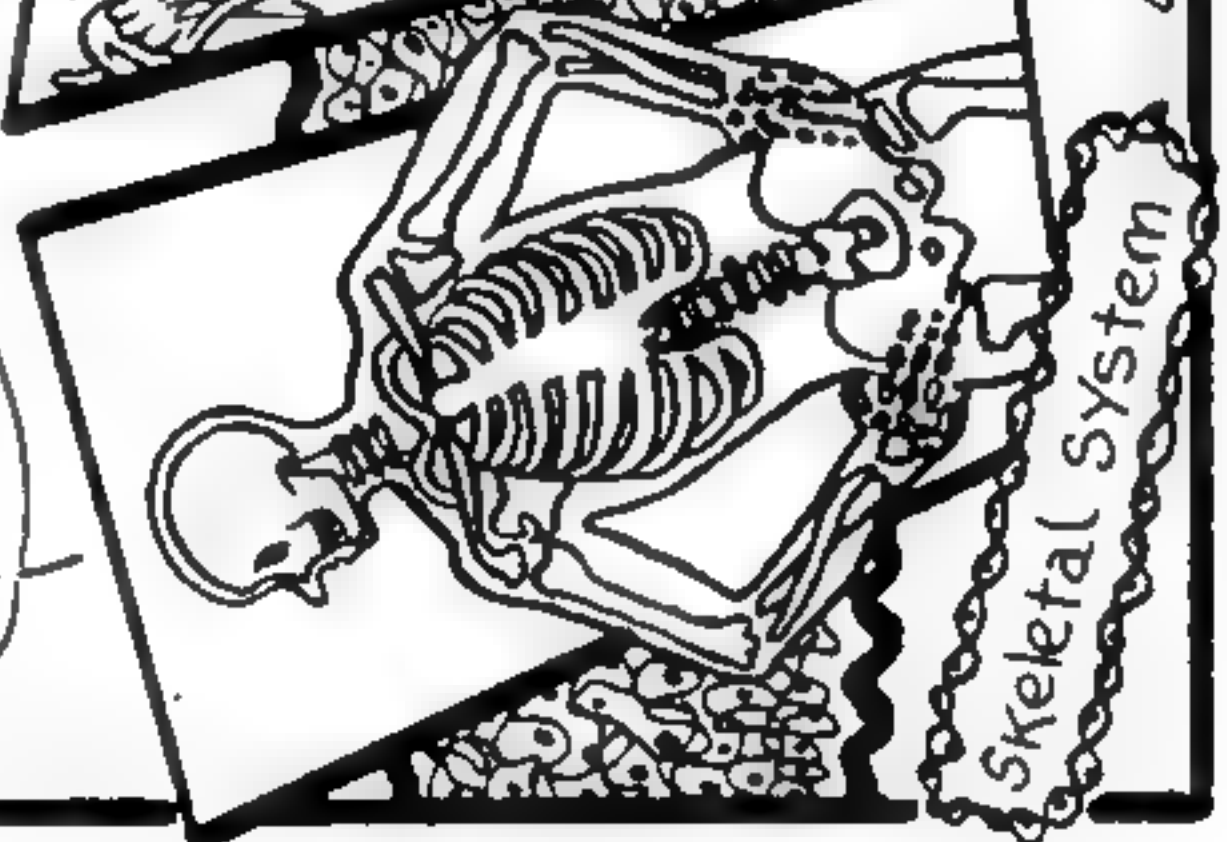
I wonder if the guy next to me realises what a wally he looks?

I'm dying for a fag!

I must remember to have my esophagus dry-cleaned tomorrow

It's not what you've got it's how you flaunt it!

Is there something I should know, Doc?



Skeletal System



Nervous System



Endocrine System



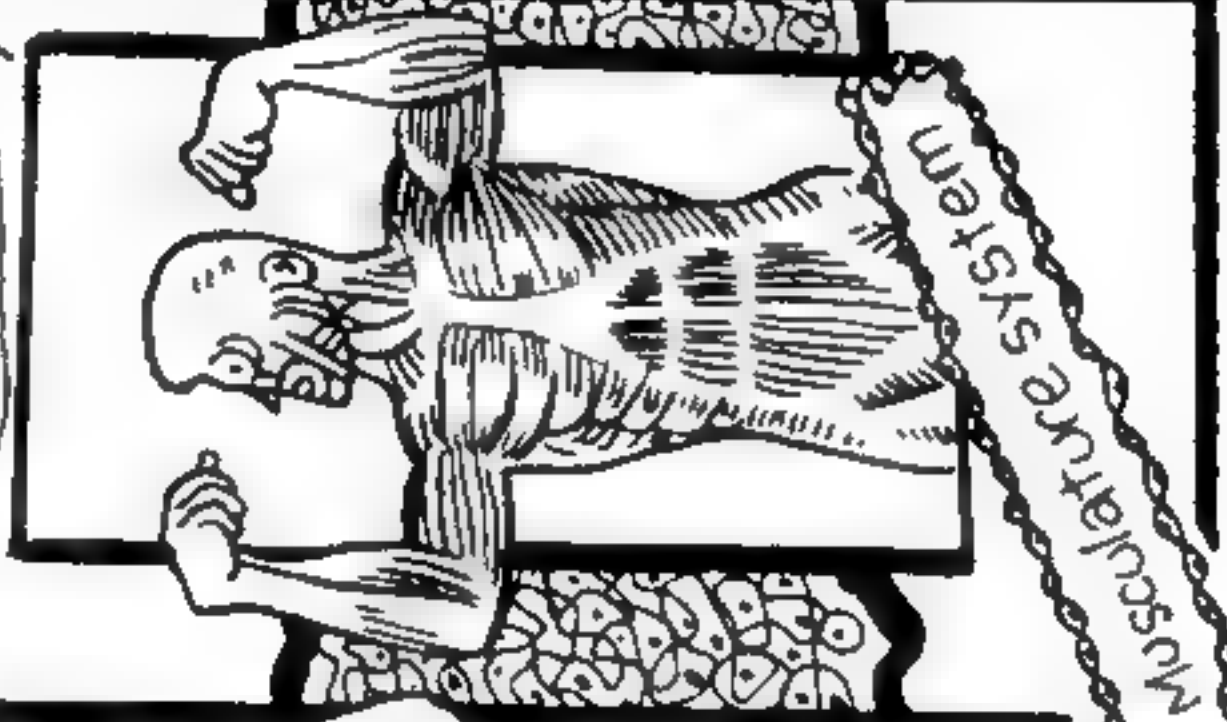
Cardiovascular System



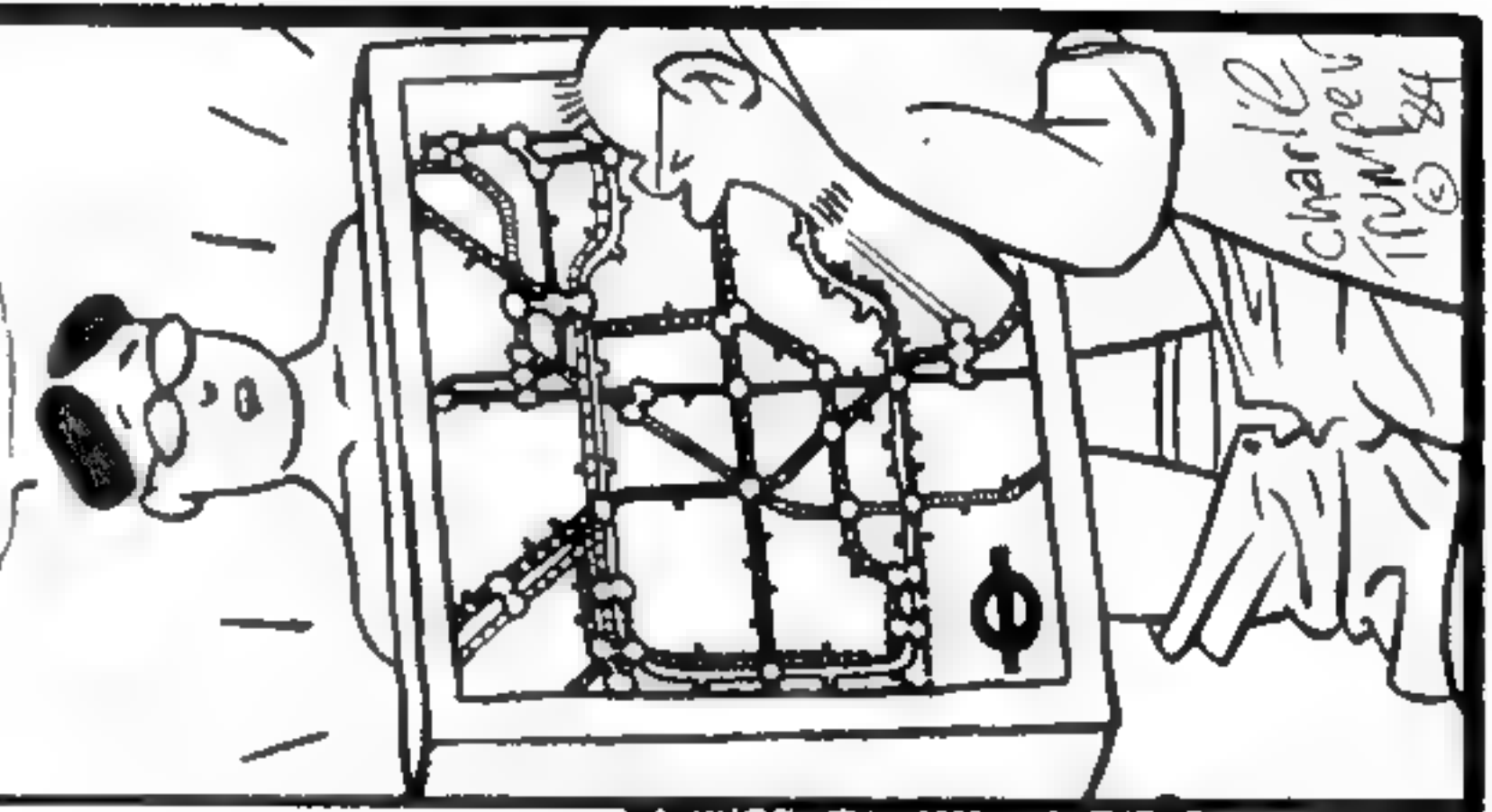
Respiratory System



Digestive System



Muscular System



Human Body

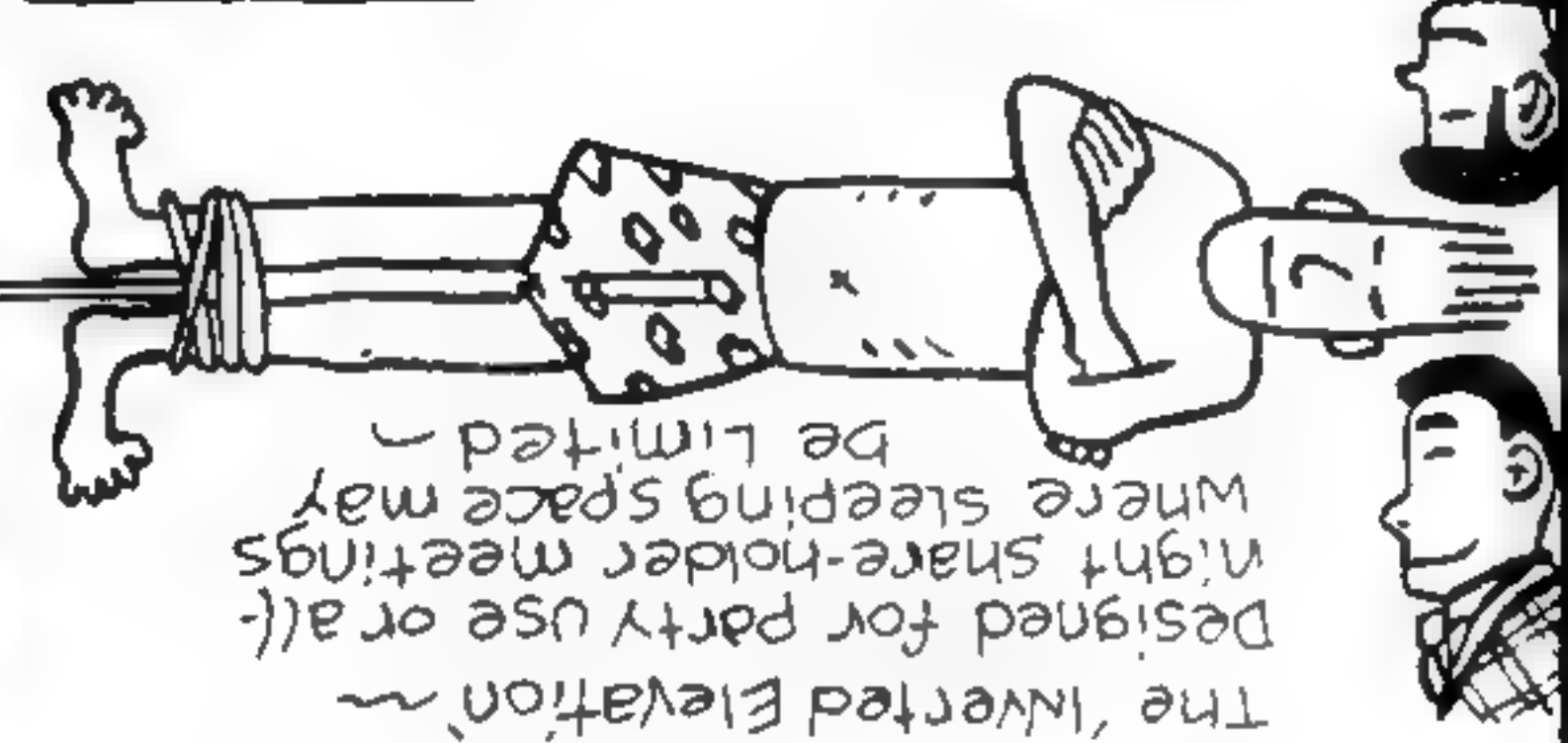
SLEEP is our chance to escape the hustle and bustle of life. Here are some suggestions which can make the activity more pleasurable!

The 'Legs' Akimbo ~ a position to revitalise a flagging romance.

The 'Agglutinated Repose' ~



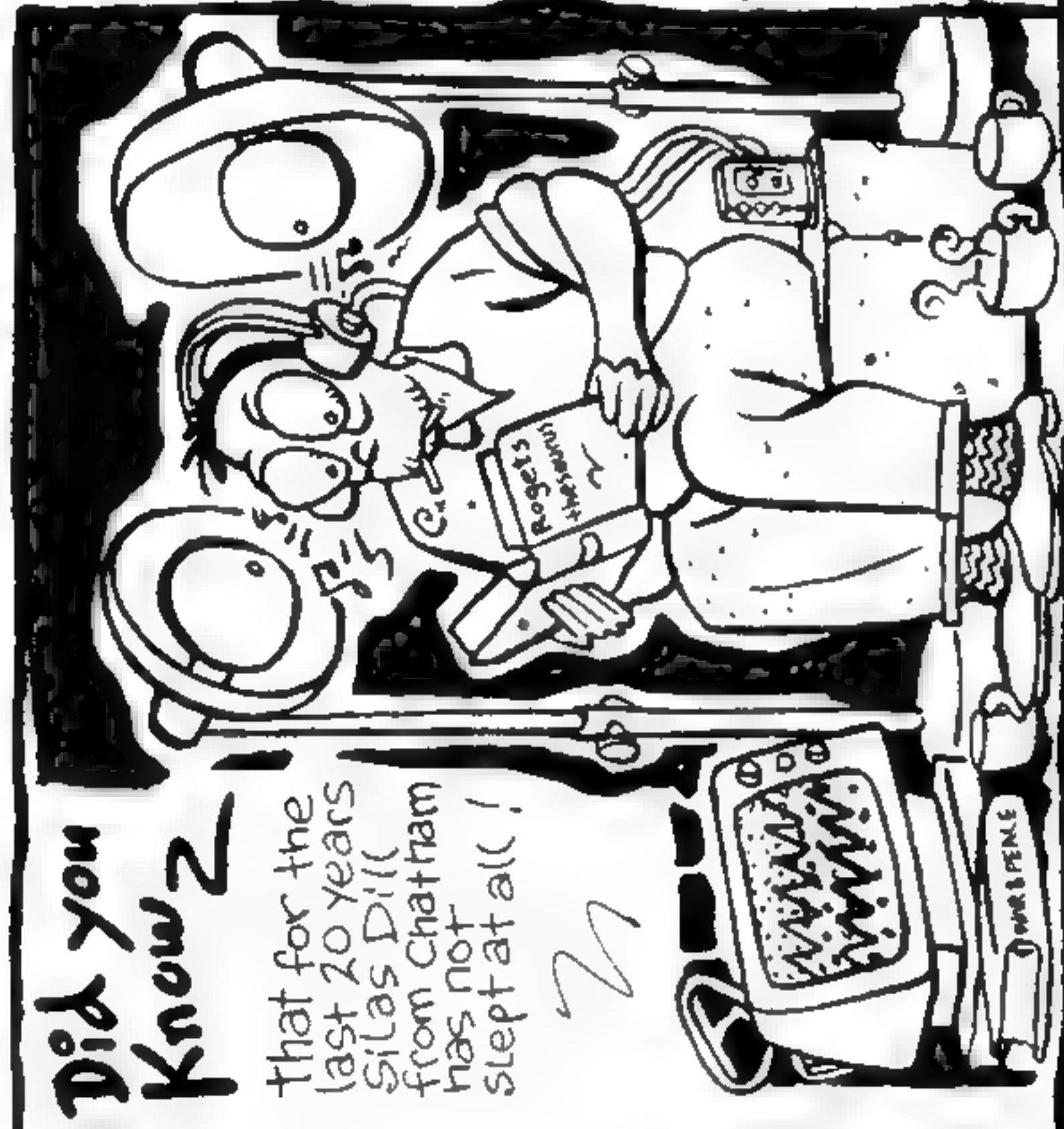
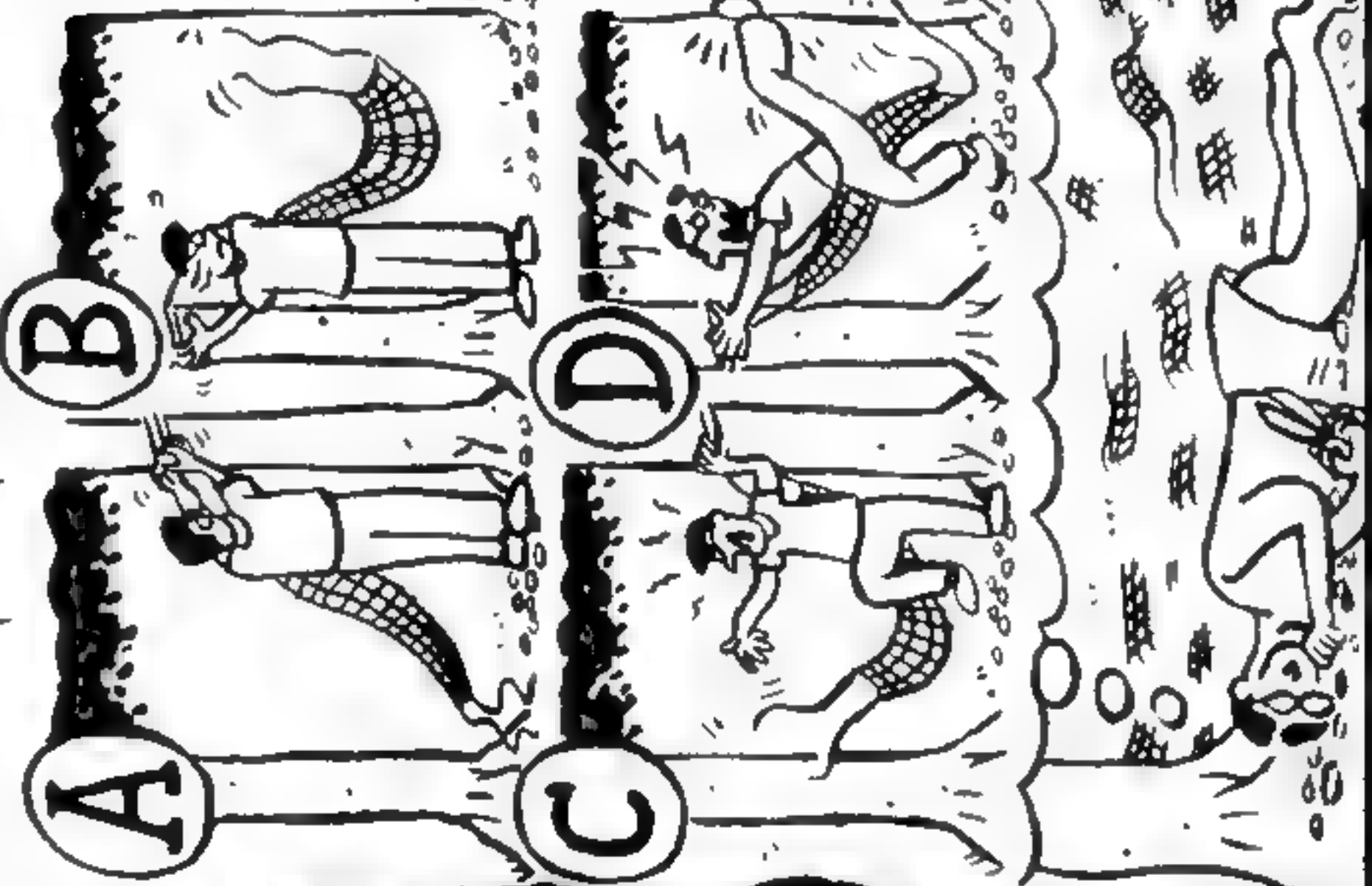
The 'Agglutinated Repose' ~ a position to revitalise a flagging romance.



The 'Inverted Elevation' ~ Designed for party use or all-night share-holder meetings where sleeping space may be limited ~

# THE WONDERS OF SCIENCE

How to put up a hammock ~



Did you Know? That for the last 20 years Silas Dill from Chat ham has not slept at all!



**BY ALAN MOORE**  
**ILLUSTRATED BY EDDIE CAMPBELL**

# GLOBETROTTING <sup>for</sup> AGORAPHOBICS

If you're reading this in a dark and wood-scented environment that seems to be littered with obsolete hair-grips, colored elastic bands and empty ballpoint pens with a woman on the side whose bikini vanishes when the pen is inverted, then it is safe to assume that (a) you're in the upper right drawer of the sideboard, and (b) you're an agoraphobic.

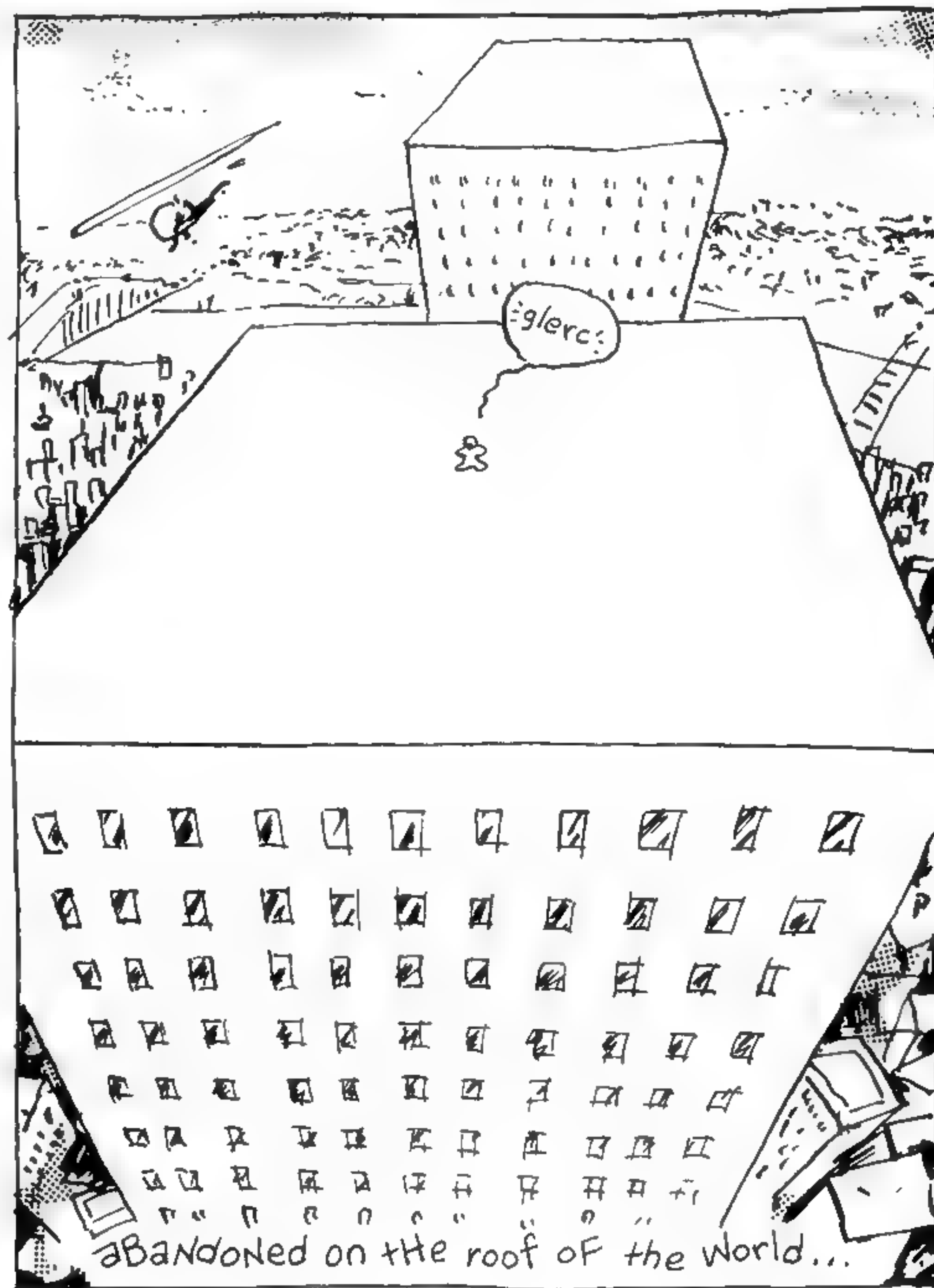
Agoraphobia, the fear of open spaces, is a comparatively mild psychiatric disorder that in many cases causes no discomfort whatsoever to its sufferers, except in those random and unpredictable instances when someone inadvertently opens the aforementioned sideboard drawer or takes the top off of the laundry basket or something of a similar nature, in which case they are likely to weep, evacuate their bowels or bite their own thumbs off. As if often the case with physical or mental disabilities, society in general seems slow to come to terms with the unique problems of these unlucky individuals. It isn't a matter of muttering embarrassed apologies and closing the door quickly when you discover your mother inside the tumble-dryer; the issue, very real and far-reaching in its consequence, goes much deeper than that.

We must ask ourselves, as a nation, what we can do for agoraphobics in our midst. How can we ease their suffering? How can we help them to see themselves as useful members of society, rather than as nuisances who get in the way when the gas-man wants to read the meter in the cupboard under the stairs? Here are a few practical suggestions.

First, insulting and condescending euphemisms like "Closet Case" and "Shut In" must be removed from the language immediately. The

same goes for "Hutch Haunter," "Cystern Squatter," "Refrigerator Resident" and all similarly insensitive terms of abuse that are currently in popular usage. I know as well as anyone that while in lighthearted and convivial banter with one's workmates, it's all too easy to forget yourself and say something like "My Uncle Ron is a real Matchbox-Minder," especially when everyone else is using the same sort of language. We must understand, however, that this is simply not good enough, and determine to try harder. Perhaps "My Uncle Ron is a person of diminished dwelling" might be less offensive.

Second, we can all of us endeavor to take simple precautions as we go about our everyday business so that we do not accidentally disturb or cause anxiety to these unfortunates by a moment's thoughtlessness. For example, next time you reach for the biscuit tin in order to provide accompaniment for your evening mug of Ovaltine, stop and think. Before removing the lid, lift the tin gently and see if you can determine from its weight and the bulge of its sides whether it contains the last four Gypsy Creams or your painfully introverted





brother who's never been the same since he was accidentally abandoned on the roof of the World Trade Center at the age of 15 months. Knock before you open the trunk of your car. Pause for a second before incautiously scraping those potato peelings into the pedal-bin. By these small and comparatively trivial acts of consideration you could be easing the discomfort of this country's Severely-Confined Citizens everywhere.

Third, and in my view most importantly, agoraphobics should be given a nice long holiday. What could be better for Lad or Lass of Limited Lebensraum than a sunny and carefree Round-The-World jaunt? Granted, there are serious difficulties involved in such an excursion, but with the application of a little ingenuity there is no real reason why even the most ardent advocate of abbreviated accommodation should not become truly cosmopolitan. Below, I have attempted to outline a few easy, step-by-step instructions towards the accomplishment of a viable vacation.

### 1. ANNOUNCING THE HOLIDAY

Since almost any agoraphobic sufferer will scream the wardrobe down if confronted with the prospect of a World Cruise, it is better not to tell them about the Holiday until the very last minute, if at all. Should such an announcement prove unavoidable, try to build up to it as gently as possible, being careful to avoid such phrases as "What you need is to get out and about a bit more often" or "How about some nice, bracing fresh air?" which may cause stress. Try instead to look at the agoraphobic's needs in a more positive light. Open the conversation with something along the lines of "I hear there are some jolly nice bathroom cabinets in Italy" and I think you'll be genuinely surprised by the result.

### 2. TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

When making travel arrangements for agoraphobics, there are really only two clearly defined alternatives open to serious consideration. The first, and perhaps the least difficult and time-consuming of these, is to simply phone the Nigerian embassy and inform them that you have a dissident expatriate of their country with critical views upon its government currently residing in the glove compartment of your Renault. In less time than it takes to say "knife," representatives of the embassy will be at your door with a syringe of unusual drugs ready to pump into the unsuspecting voyager before the commencement of his journey, an innovative in-flight convenience which even the world's most progressive airlines have been surprisingly reluctant to introduce. Next, the hibernating holidaymaker will be placed inside a packing crate and transported around the world under the guise of diplomatic baggage, a perfect means of travel for a dedicated Shoebox-Shelterer. The only serious drawback to this mode of



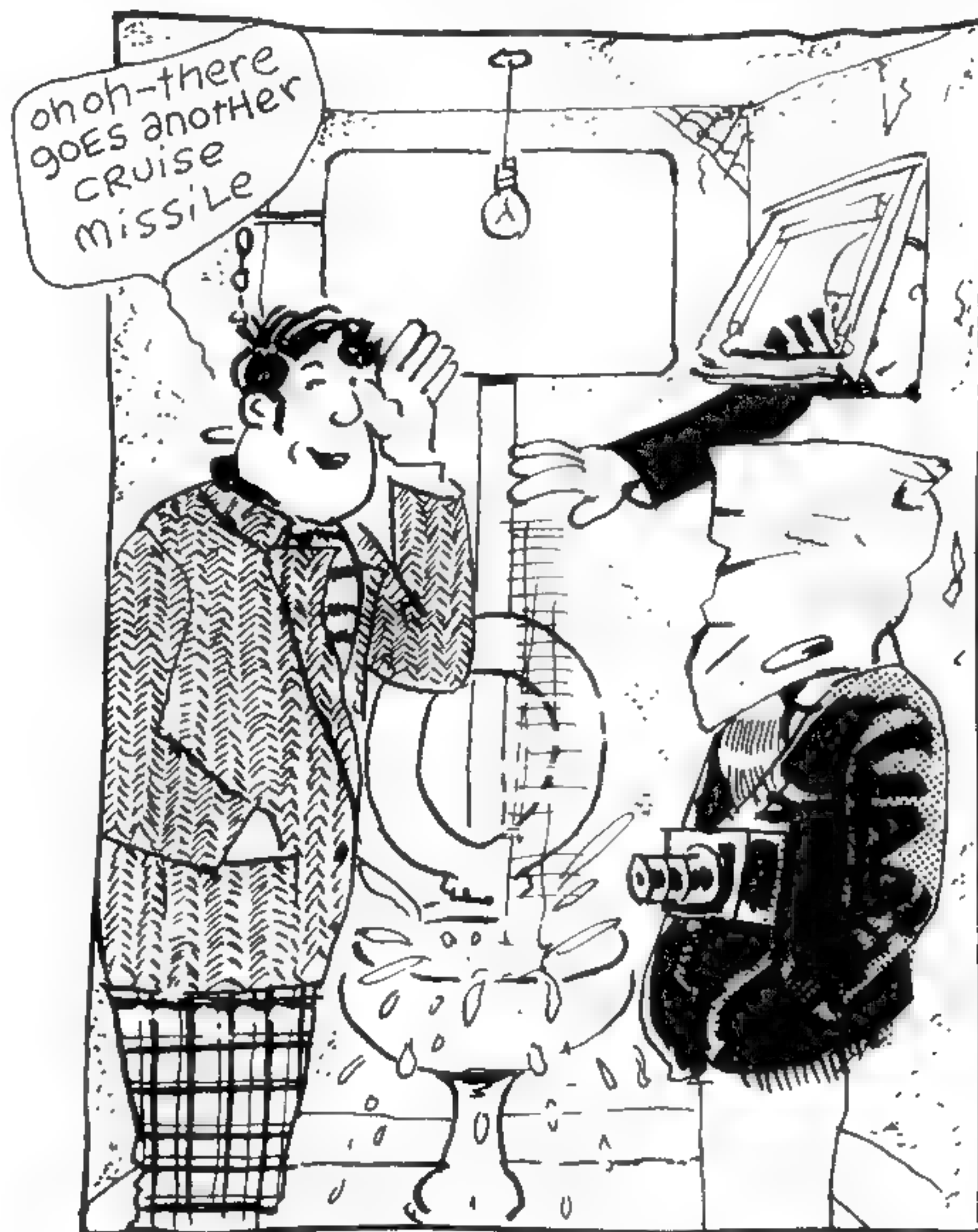
transport is that upon your arrival at his country of destination the tranquilized tourist will almost certainly be tortured, forced to renounce all previously-held political affiliations, and then be put to death before a firing squad. For this reason, many seasoned globetrotters prefer to plump for the second of two options mentioned above, by which the complete circumnavigation of the globe can be accomplished without the need to set foot beyond the front door. This method is dealt with thoroughly in our next section.

### 3. PRETENDING YOU'RE IN TORREMOLINOS WHEN IN FACT YOU'RE ACTUALLY IN THE AIRING CUPBOARD

Not as difficult as it sounds. Remember, the recipient of your generosity will be almost pathetically eager to avoid any chance glimpse of an object more than four feet away from them, and they will gratefully acquiesce when you suggest that their trip might be more comfortable and enjoyable were they to wear a Sainsbury's carrier-bag over their head for its duration. Once they are unable to see, the deception becomes far less problematic.

First, you must convince them that they are being put into a taxi and taken to the airport. To do this, sit them in a poorly-upholstered chair and turn Radio One up as loud as you can to prevent them from noticing the absence of engine noise. If they remark upon the fact that they do not feel as if they are actually moving, talk glowingly of your suspension in an unrecognizably gruff cockney voice until they shut up about it. To add verisimilitude to the experience, you may find that it helps to shout "For Christ's sake get in the slow lane or put your foot down, you black bastard" at carefully spaced intervals throughout the "journey."

After roughly one and a half hours, inform them that they have reached the airport and ask for 85 pounds. While they are fumbling for their wallet, place your head inside a metal waste-paper basket chosen for its resonance and, adopting a barely-intelligible feminine falsetto, announce that their flight leaves in five minutes. Almost invariably, they will emit an anxious groan from beneath the paper bag, fling a handful of ten pound notes to the imaginary taxi-driver, and then, turning 'round, run full-tilt into the living room wall, knocking themselves unconscious. Before they come around, sit them in an armchair that is situated so as to be facing the wall from less than





a foot away, requiring that their knees be tucked up under the chin in an uncomfortable position, where they will remain for the next eight hours. When they regain consciousness, ask them to extinguish their cigarettes and inform them that if they will look towards the center aisle, the stewardess will demonstrate the use of the lifejacket against the eventuality of the plane being forced into a landing over water. The fact that they are unable to see this possibly vital demonstration of basic safety precautions will create a genuine sense of unease indistinguishable from that experienced by all normal airline passengers while in flight. Checking first with the *Radio* or *TV Times*, announce the title of their in-flight movie and then switch the television on. If you become bored during the next seven or so hours, why not announce some "Air Turbulence" while gripping the bag-blinkered traveller's armchair from the rear and shaking it violently from side to side? In any eventuality, you are now "On Your Way" and the most difficult part is over. All that remains is the task of providing a credible approximation of the countries that your jittery jet-setter is to visit.

#### 4. FINLAND IN YOUR LAVATORY

One of the easiest, this. You can get away with almost anything for the simple reason that no one has ever been to Finland or has the least idea of what it looks like, especially not from inside a carrier bag. To suggest the bitter and arctic climate an electric fan will be needed, unless you are one of those fortunate enough to own an outside water closet, in which case simply leave the door open. The noise of the tank refilling can be passed off as the gently lapping wavelets of a nearby fjord, even if they don't actually have fjords in Finland. Certainly, no one who has spent their childhood inside a tea-caddy is going to contradict a local. If you say there are fjords in Finland, they are almost guaranteed not to argue. Should they still seem inclined to debate the point, drop a brick into the toilet bowl with a loud splash and say "Uh-oh! There goes another Russian cruise missile! Good job it landed in the fjord."

#### 5. JAPAN IN YOUR PANTRY

Since Japan is one of the most seriously overcrowded and cramped nations upon the planet, the ordinary domestic pantry is by far the best place to construct your own "Land of the Rising Sun." Simply run an exhaust hose in through the pantry window so as to simulate the proper atmosphere and then play a tape of people talking backwards at 78 RPM. If your "visitor" should open his mouth to ask awkward or embarrassing questions concerning your country and its traditions, ram a piece of raw fish into it and whisk him off to examine production at a famous Nipponese micro-chip manufacturer. A handful of Shreddies tipped onto a baking tray will pass as state-of-the-art miniature circuitry to all but the most discerning fingertips, I assure you.



#### 6. SWEDEN IN YOUR KITCHEN

Seating your by-now-world-weary explorer in the chest freezer, fill the sink with blancmange and then try vigorously to unblock it using a conventional plumber's suction cup while asking them what they think of the live sex show. The sub-zero temperature should adequately prevent their arousal from reaching a pitch where they become difficult or unmanageable, but in extreme cases you must use your own judgment.

#### 7. SOUTH AMERICA IN YOUR GREENHOUSE

Hopefully self-exploratory. All that's needed is a small electrical generator, a length of copper wire and a couple of crocodile clips, and the illusion is complete.

Obviously, there is little point in my going on at great length to describe the manifold delights of Botswana in Your Passageway or The People's Republic of China in Your Spare Bedroom. By now, the basic techniques should be clear to anyone who is at all interested in providing this selfless service for some inmate of inhibiting habitation or other. With just a little bit of imagination, I'm sure your own will spring to mind. For instance, how about the simulation of various lethal and singular diseases that may have been picked up in the tropics? Or an impromptu strip-search when your holiday-maker is returning through "British Customs"? The possibilities are endless.

It's true that at the end of the day you are left with little more than a warm glow of charitable satisfaction and whatever money you have managed to extort during your imposture as a string of unscrupulous continental hoteliers, but think of the benefit to the poor benighted creature that you have aided by your actions. Even if he or she still doesn't want to come out of the umbrella stand ever again, they will at least have a much fuller understanding of what it was that drove them there in the first place. Remember... agoraphobics are as much a part of our society as anyone else. They have a valid lifestyle which shouldn't be regarded as an illness or something to be ashamed of. If we all work together and try to be a little more understanding, perhaps we can help them all to admit what they are, free from shame and go back into the closet without the fear or ridicule or reproach. Thank you for listening.

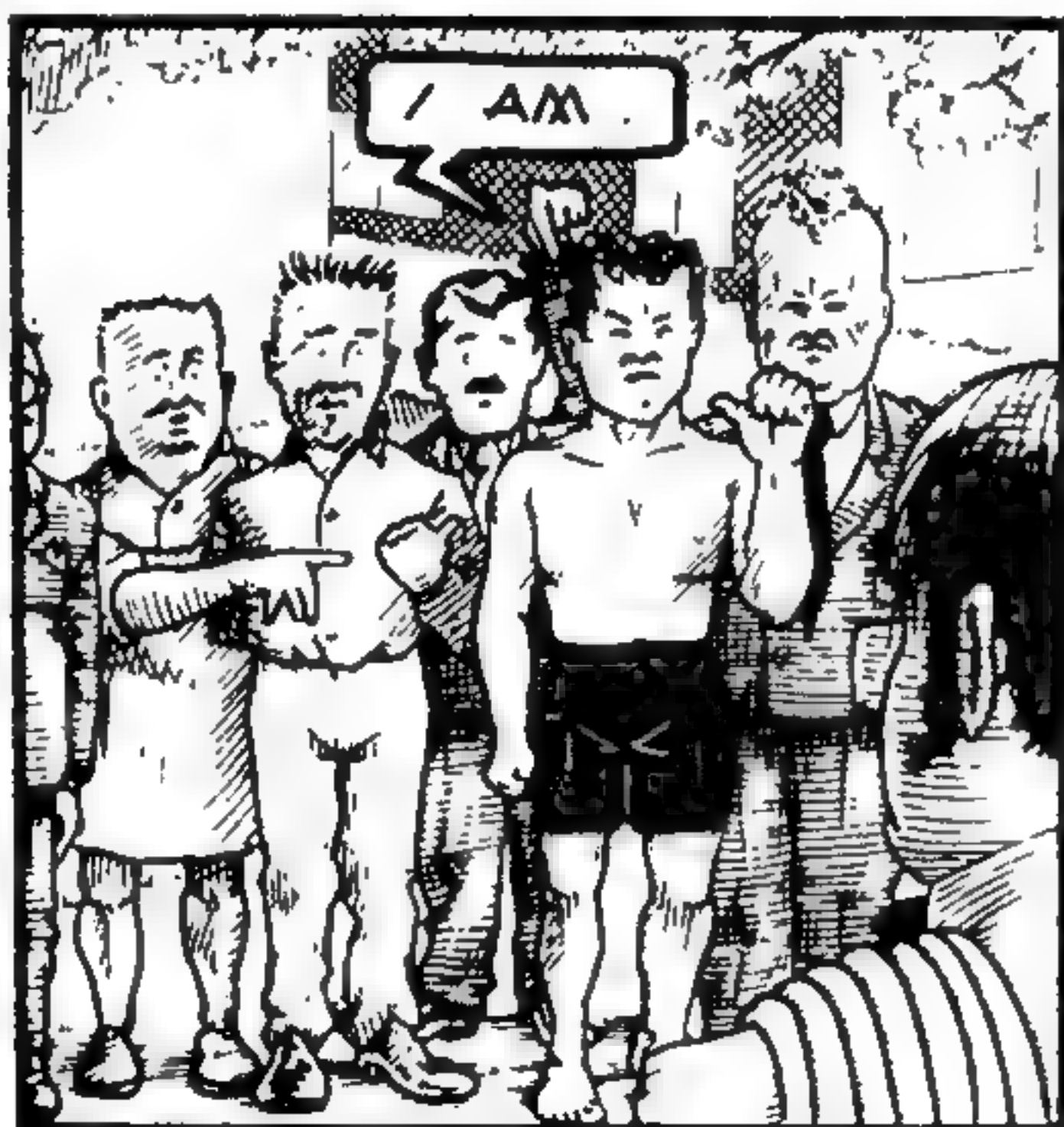




# REID FLEMING

WORLD'S TOUGHEST MILKMAN

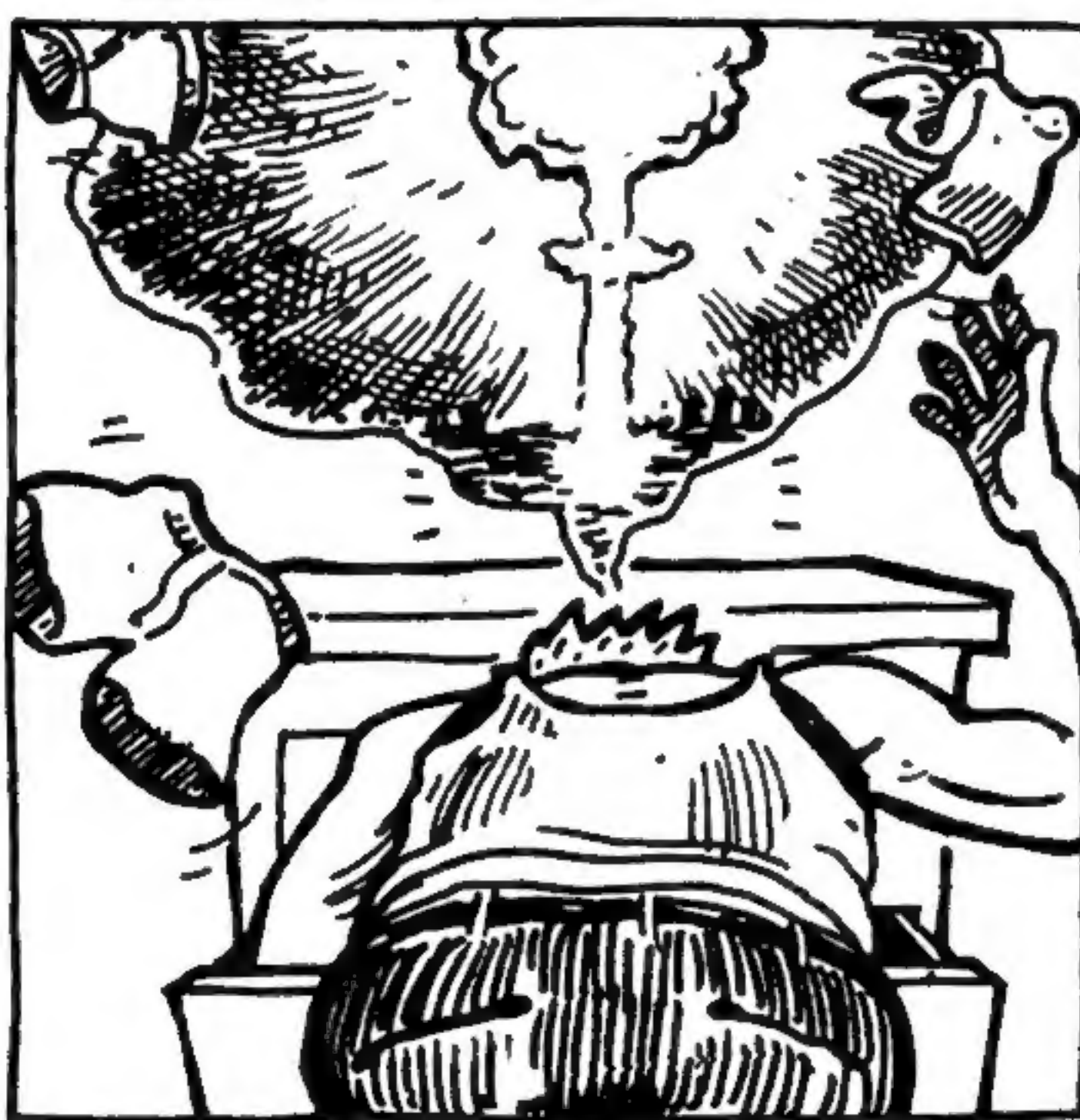
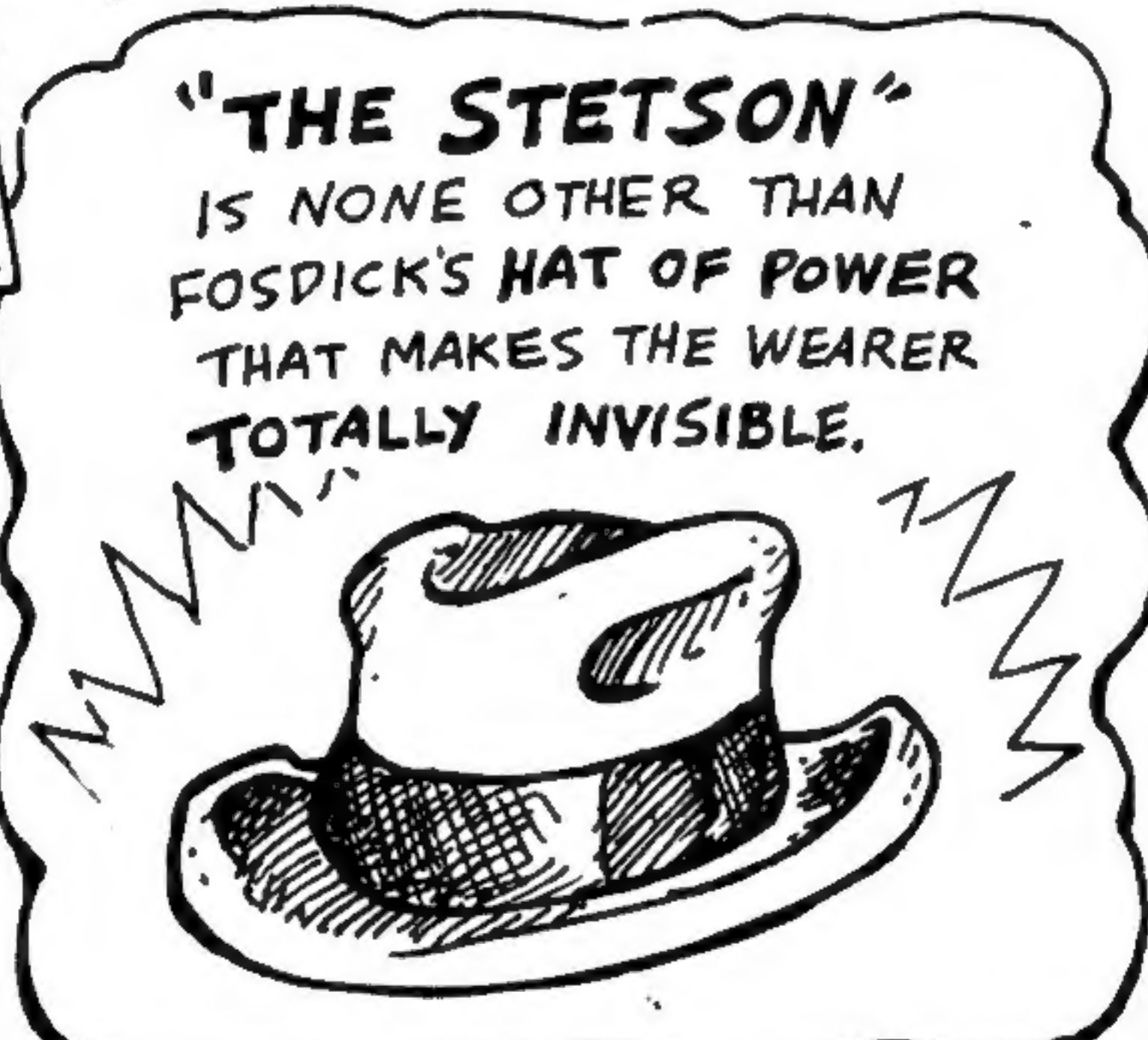
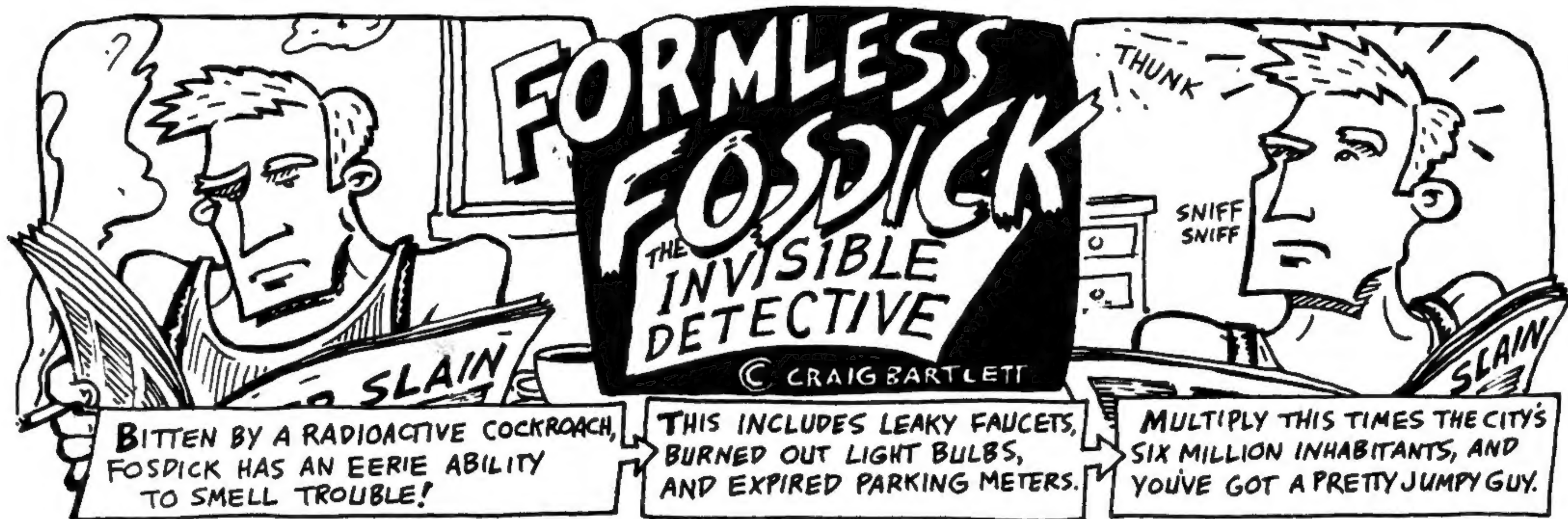
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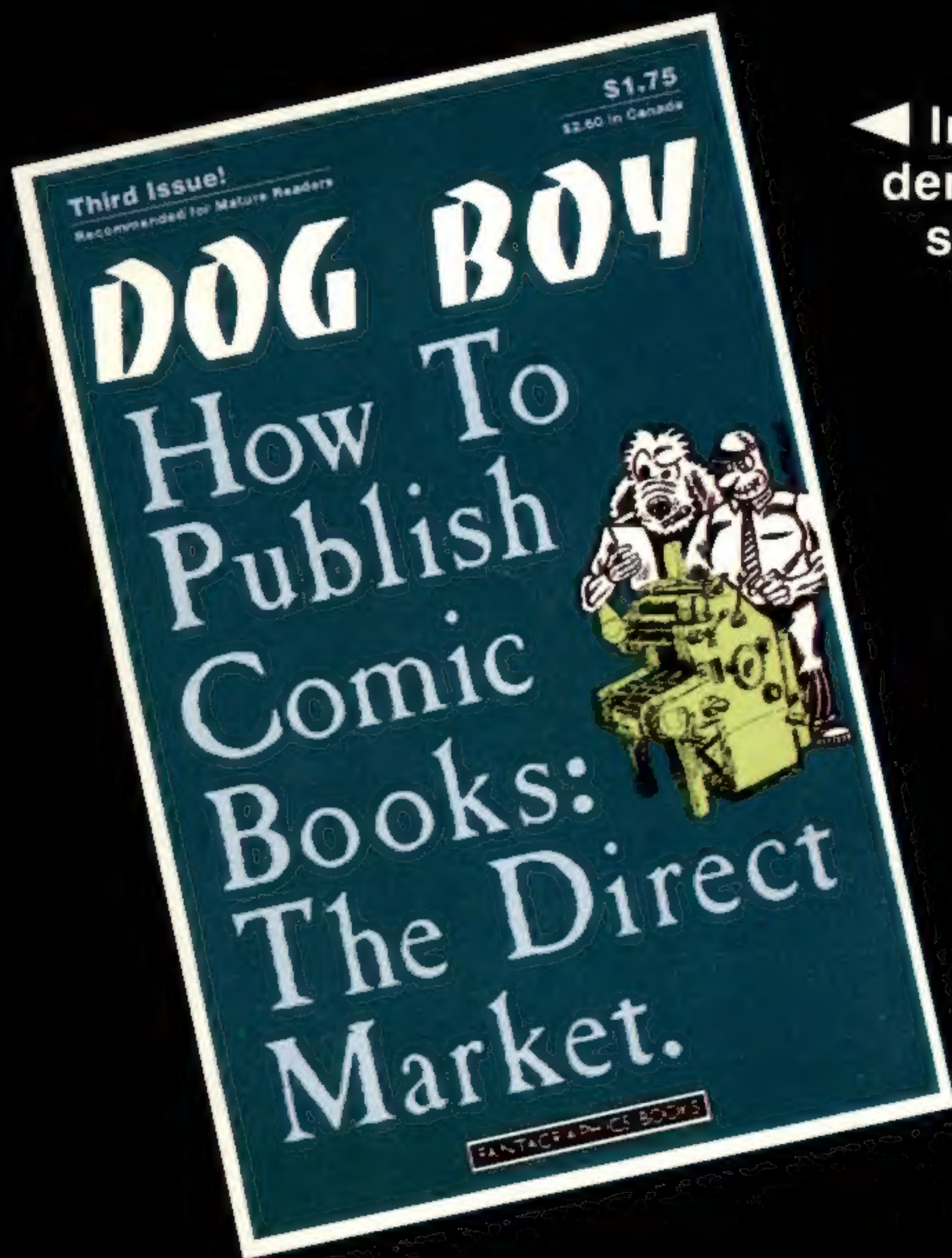


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